

ASIAN
THOUGHT
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*Marriage as
Political Strategy
and Cultural
Expression*

Mongolian Royal Marriages from
World Empire to Yuan Dynasty

George Qingzhi Zhao

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Sandra A. Wawrytko
General Editor

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PETER LANG

New York • Washington, D.C./Baltimore • Bern
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This book is dedicated
to my family,
with love

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FOREWORD

This study is an attempt to examine Mongolian royal marriages from the World Empire (1206–1279) to the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368), focusing on the various aspects of marriage strategies of the Mongol royal family and the political implications of Mongol royal marriage. This study also attempts to solve, by examining the marriage partners of the Mongol royal family, the enigma of how and why an imperial marriage was arranged and determined, and to reveal further the relationships between the Mongol royal family and its marriage partners.

My interest in the subject matter stemmed from my curiosity about the nature of the Yuan period in Chinese history. This period was distinctive, since on the one hand, China was reunified after more than a century of division since 1125; but on the other hand, for the first time, the whole territory of China fell under the rule of an alien people, which had long been viewed by the Han people as “barbarian.” This broke the historical tradition that the Han people had ruled most of the territory known as the “Middle Kingdom” for fourteen centuries since the Qin dynasty first unified China in 221 B.C. For the first time since then, a minority nationality had become the ruling nationality while the Han nationality was reduced to the status of a ruled people. The Yuan period is regarded in official historiography as a legitimate Chinese dynasty, yet in fact the Mongol population in China barely exceeded one-tenth of the conquered Song dynasty’s population.

Four sets of inquiries have been conceptualized. The first is concerned with the marriage institutions of the Mongol elite in terms of “Sinicization.” Since the Mongols entered and dominated state power of China, did their marriage customs change to or adapt to Chinese culture? If so, to what extent did they evolve? If not they did not change, why not?

The second group of questions focuses specifically upon royal marriages. How did the imperial clan choose its marriage partners? What were the criteria and considerations when determining a marriage? Who were the Empresses? Who were the imperial sons-in-law? From where did they originate?

The third group of questions is associated with the characteristics of Mongol royal marriages in comparative terms. In comparison with the royal marriages of such “alien dynasties” as Liao, Jin, Xixia, and typical Chinese

dynasties such as Tang and Song, what were the distinguishing features of Mongol royal marriages?

The fourth group of questions is concerned with the role of imperial women, including the Empresses and the Princesses within Mongol Yuan political structures. Were they active or inactive in the politics of the Mongol Empire and the Yuan dynasty? If they were “active”, then, what motivated them to be involved in politics and what influenced their decision to play political roles?

Scholars of the Yuan dynasty are constantly confronted with the problem of determining the scope and limit of their studies with regard to the span of the Mongol Yuan dynasty. Thus, when we study marriage strategies of the Mongolian royal house within the political and cultural contexts, one issue has to be determined before proceeding any further. What is the starting point? Was it from Chinggis Khan or from Khubilai Khan?

Strictly speaking, the Yuan dynasty was founded by Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–1294). In 1260 he ascended the throne of the Mongol Empire without election by the assembly of Mongol nobles called *Khuriltai*. In 1264, he moved his capital to Dadu from Karakorum. In 1271, he started to use “Yuan”¹ as his dynastic name. In 1279, he finally conquered the Southern Song and united China. Although all these years are pivotal, the generally recognized starting point of the Yuan dynasty is 1279. Traditionally, however, Chinese scholars of Yuan history have treated 1206 as their historical accounts, since in this year Chinggis, whose name means “universal,” became the Mongol khan.² In view of the historical continuity of the Mongol royal marital tradition, it is desirable to start from Chinggis Khan to describe the Mongolian royal marriages, or at least to treat this period as a necessary historical background. In this study, I will treat Chinggis Khan as the starting point of the Mongolian royal marriage tradition.

George Qingzhi Zhao

¹ Yuan derives from the principle of *qian yuan* (“the original creative force”) in the *Book of Changes*. For a detailed explanation of this dynastic title see John Langlois, Introduction to *China under Mongol Rule*, (ed.) John D Langlois, Jr. Princeton University Press, (1981): 3-7.

² For example, the *Yuanshi* started records of annals, biographies, and tables all from Chinggis Khan. Almost all later works in Yuan history follow this tradition.

PREFACE

As Dr. George Qingzhi Zhao states in his illuminating book on the Mongols' marriage strategies, historians have scarcely accorded much attention to the Yuan dynasty. The dynasty's limited tenure and its deviations from certain cultural norms, such as its suspension of the traditional civil service examinations as a means of recruiting officials, also deterred scholars from serious study of its significance. Foreign rule over China was still another road block, as many Chinese scholars tended to focus on the great Chinese dynasties. With so few studies of the Yuan, stereotypes abounded. Some texts accused the Mongols of introducing a harsher tone to government in China, even attributing the so-called despotism of later dynasties to their influence. Other works portrayed the Mongols' supposed subversion of Chinese culture, emphasizing that some of the most important cultural innovations were produced by artists who rejected government service and became recluses, devoting their talents to painting, poetry, and essays. Indeed study of their paintings, poetry, and plays reputedly reveal *sub rosa* critiques of the "barbarian" overlords of China.

The post-1970s resurgence of studies of the Mongol empire, inspired by increasing interest in global history (or the first glimmerings of globalization) and in cross-cultural contacts, has cast a different light on the invaders from the East. In recent works, their positive achievements and influence have been emphasized. They patronized the arts, as evidenced in recent exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the National Palace Museum in Taipei, and encouraged scientific and technological interchanges among the diverse lands they had subjugated. Their support for most of the religions in their realms inspired construction of mosques, Buddhist monasteries, and Nestorian Christian churches, not to mention increasing prominence for Tibetan Buddhist monks, Nestorian patriarchs, and Sufi thinkers. Among the greatest cultural achievements were Rashid al-Din's universal history, Zhao Mengfu's paintings, Persian illustrated manuscripts, and Russian gold jewelry and horse trappings.

Specialists did not ignore the Mongols' brutality and the destruction they wrought, but they simply highlighted their positive contributions, which had hardly been addressed. Most previous accounts had described the Mongols as marauders, rapists, and murderers bent on destruction, without much mention

of the institutions and policies they had introduced in Russia, the Middle East, Central Asia, China, and other parts of their empire. The newer studies contributed to a more balanced assessment of the Mongols' influence on global history. Over the past four or five years, popularizers have distorted these research findings by asserting, with scant evidence, that the Mongols ushered in the modern world and that Chinggis Khan was a democrat—absurd assertions.

The burgeoning research on the Mongols has not been matched by a dramatic increase in studies of the specific Mongol influence on China. To be sure, analysis of the Mongol empire in general has illuminated aspects of their influence on China, but the precise impact of Mongol rule on the Yuan regime requires further study. Paul Smith's and Richard von Glahn's edited work *The Song–Yuan–Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Harvard University Press, 2003) and my own book *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (University of California Press, 1988) have initiated such efforts, more work, specifically on the Yuan dynasty, will reveal much more about the Mongols' influence (or lack thereof) on China.

Dr. Zhao's book needs to be viewed in that context. It is innovative in providing a guide not only to the Mongols' marital strategies but also to the position of elite women in Mongol society. It describes their marital policies concerning the Uyghurs, the Oyrat, and various other groups with whom they interacted, and Dr. Zhao differentiates between one-way and two way marriage alliances. That is, whether the relationship turned out to be reciprocal (two-way) or simply one way, in which one side, usually the Mongols, sent young women to marry foreign leaders. Dr. Zhao emphasizes the Yuan adoption of the practice and offers new information and insights, in particular on its use in the Koryo-Mongol relationship. En passant he writes about the Chinese disdain for and abhorrence of the levirate, a traditional Mongol practice, and discusses changing policies toward it during the Yuan.

In short, Dr. Zhao's book yields more than the study of a curious aspect of diplomacy. It encompasses description of a whole institution and its development as a Mongol custom and the changes it underwent during the Yuan, a process which is very revealing about the dynasty.

Morris Rossabi

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. In this study the terms “Mongolian” and “royal” are used for general description, and specifically refer to the time period before 1279, the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty; “Mongol” and “imperial” refers to the time period of the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368).
2. “Koryŏ” is used for description of interstate relations; “Korean” is used for general description.
3. In general, offices and official titles in this study follow Charles O. Hucker’s *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* and *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol Yuan Period (1200–1300)*, edited by Igor de Rachewitz, Hok-Lam Chan, Hsiao Ch’i-Ch’ing and Peter W. Geier.
4. For the transliteration of Oriental names and terms I adopt the following standard systems: Pinyin for Chinese, McCune-Reischauer for Korean, and Hepburn for Japanese. The Royal Asiatic Society system has been used for the transliteration of Persian. Certain general accepted terms and names employed in English have been retained.

Antoine Mostaert’s scheme for the transliteration of Mongolian, as modified by Francis W. Cleaves, has been used except for the following deviations:

č is replaced by ch,
š is replaced by sh
γ is replaced by gh
q is replaced by kh

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Yuan studies have been relatively neglected by scholars both in China and abroad, principally because of the relatively short span of the Mongol dynasty, Chinese distaste for nomadic rule, and the demanding linguistic requirements for sources in Mongolian and the languages of the Islamic world. Thus, studies are scarce of marriage and the family in Yuan China in Western literature compared with other periods in Chinese history, such as those of the Song, Ming, and Qing periods. It is probably for this reason that the Yuan period has often been omitted by scholars in their discussions of women's marriage and life in China. Given the recent progress of women's history in the larger historical profession, it seems reasonable to ask how much research has to be done on women and the family in the Yuan period in order to signify general history of Yuan society or culture.

Early Western observers were naturally surprised by the unusual features of Mongol marriage customs, since they stood in sharp contrast to those of the Chinese as well as to their own. These features include levirate marriage and the unusually important roles of women in the family and clan. Modern Western scholars are therefore inclined to describe and compare the differences in marriage institutions and customs between Mongols and Chinese as their principal analytic tool.

Among scholars of the Yuan period, Morris Rossabi, Herbert Franke, John Langlois, Jennifer Holmgren, and John Dardess, among others, have conducted studies specifically on women, marriage and family of the Yuan period. Rossabi has written the best biography of Khubilai Khan, whose life and career spanned the rise and decline of the Mongol empire.¹ To write this book, he consulted not only Chinese sources, but also Middle Eastern and European sources, including Persian, Arab, Armenian, Syriac, and Italian. He has produced excellent bibliographies which contain five hundred and sixty-four sources in Western languages and one hundred and nineteen sources in Oriental languages. Among the latter, twenty-three are primary sources. Among his studies focused on elite women in the Mongol empire are

¹ Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

“Khubilai Khan and The Women in His Family”,² and “Kuan Tao-sheng: Woman Artist in Yuan China”.³ The former offers detailed descriptions of the lives of several renowned Mongolian women, including Hö’elun (wife of Yesugei and mother of Chinggis Khan), Sorghaghtani-Beki senior wife of Tolui and mother of Khubilai), and Chabui, Empress of Khubilai Khan).

Herbert Franke has produced various studies regarding Mongol rule in China, cultural interactions under Mongol rule, historiography in Yuan times, and typical figures in the Yuan dynasty. His recently published book, *China under Mongol Rule*,⁴ collects thirteen previously published articles. One of them, “Women under the Dynasties of Conquest”, deals with women’s lives under the Liao (907-1125), Jin (1115-1234), Xi Xia (11th cent. -1227) and Yuan (1279-1368).

John Langlois’ edited book, *China under Mongol Rule*,⁵ collects the articles of the most prominent Yuan scholars: Hok-lam Chan, John Langlois, Herbert Franke, Morris Rossabi, et al., whose essays range over a number of issues, including institutions, thought, foreigners in China, and art and literature. In the introduction to this volume Langlois raises some important issues in Yuan studies such as the legitimacy of Mongol rule in China, the characteristics of Mongol rule, the legal system of the Yuan period, and Sinicization. Langlois’s paper in this collection, “Political thought in China under Mongol Rule”, investigates the development of one part of Chinese culture under Mongol rule. The author suggests that Mongol rule in China went through various transformations. By the time Khubilai Khan conquered South China in the 1270s, Mongol rule had already been altered by the encounter with Chinese civilization in the north. In its new form, Mongol rule was not simply an occupation by nomads aimed at seizure of booty from the sedentary people of China. It had become a hybrid form of government, partly bureaucratic, and partly colonial and military. It focused on seizing booty, and on developing wealth and income in the ruled territories. However, it never compromised on the principle of Mongol superiority.

John Dardess concentrated on the question of assimilation. His monograph *Conquerors and Confucians: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yuan China* highlights the influences of Chinese culture on the Mongol

² Morris Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and The Women in His Family", in *Studia Sino-Mongolica*, Festschrift. Fur Herbert Franke ed. by Wolfgang Bauer. Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, Wiesbaden, (1979): 153-80.

³ Morris Rossabi, "Kuan Tao-sheng: Woman Artist in Yuan China", in *Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies*, 21 (November 21, 1989): 67-84.

⁴ Herbert Franke, *China under Mongol Rule*, Variorum, (1994).

⁵ John Langlois, ed., *China under Mongol Rule*, Princeton University Press, (1981).

rulers in the Yuan dynasty.⁶ He argues that by the late Yuan period, the conquerors had become Confucian adherents themselves. As a privileged ruling caste, the Mongols and their non-Chinese (*semu*) allies became Confucianized to a high degree. But they were scarcely on that account absorbed or swallowed by the Chinese majority, since Confucian-ism, through its insistence upon the principles of ancestral loyalty and filial piety, tended to preserve rather than level ethnic and national distinctions. This book shows that a violent Confucian political debate took place in the late Yuan period. The high point of this debate occurred from 1340 to 1355, when reformist and conservative Confucian administrations succeeded each other at roughly five-year intervals. Each had a completely different idea of the proper aims and conduct of political life. Dardess also explored the comments of Taizu, the founder of the Ming dynasty (Zhu Yuanzhang) on the Yuan.⁷ It seemed to Taizu that the history of the Yuan presented a series of conflicting images of grandeur and decadence, and of legitimacy and outrage. Dardess points out that Taizu's remarks about the Yuan were not offered as models of dispassionate inquiry. They were advanced to underscore various policy positions taken by the early Ming state, which is probably one reason why his views are so often inconsistent.

Yuan imperial marriage, therefore, has attracted little scholarly attention and has been studied only in a fragmentary fashion as a result of current availability of materials in Mongol history and Yuan history. Available studies in this area concentrate only upon the most well-known Emperors and Empresses, and very little attention has been devoted to the marriages of other Emperors, Imperial Consorts, Princes and Princesses. Also, there are few, if any studies on the families from which Empresses and other Consorts were selected, and the types of families chosen to provide husbands for Princesses.

Jennifer Holmgren is the first scholar to attempt to theoretically explain various phenomena in the imperial marriages of the Yuan and the Mongol marital traditions. Her analyses and arguments are generally enlightening and convincing because of her thorough studies on the imperial marriage in both native Chinese and non-Han states. Her arguments might have been more cogent and convincing if she had provided more concrete facts to support them. One of her essays, "Imperial Marriage in the Native Chinese and Non-

⁶ John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yuan China*, Columbia University Press, (1973).

⁷ John W. Dardess, "Ming T'ai-tsu on the Yuan: An Autocrat's Assessment of the Mongol Dynasty", *The Bulletin of Sung and Yuan Studies*, 14 (November 14, 1978): 6-10.

Han State, Han to Ming",⁸ demonstrates the variety and political ingenuity of marriage systems designed by the leaders of conquest dynasties. Three states: the Tuoba (A.D. 399-534), the Qidan (Khitan) Liao dynasty (A. D. 916-1122), and the Mongol empire (A. D. 1200-1368), are selected for investigation. The author concludes that imperial marriage policy under conquest dynasties consisted of a judicious mix of elements derived from both the steppes and the Chinese traditions. Holmgren also attempts to explain marriage and inheritance practices, with references to the levirate of early Mongol and Yuan societies in terms of the bride-price theory.⁹ She believes that early Mongol society was characterized by the bride-price system, a transaction in which marriage wealth passed from the groom's family to that of the bride. Holmgren's evidence about the bride-price in Mongol society is mainly discovered in the writings of Rubruck and Carpini, two independent observers of Mongol culture in the early part of the thirteenth-century.

However, this bride-price theory can hardly be confirmed by the original sources of Mongolian history such as *The Secret History of the Mongols*. For example, in Tiemujin, in the later Chinggis Khan's first marriage, this was not the case. The betrothal gift his father presented to Borte's father Dei Sechen was only a horse. While a gift Borte brought to her parents-in-law, a valuable black marten garment, helped Tiemujin establish a close relationship with Ong Khan, the chief of the powerful Kereit tribe in the Mongol steppes.¹⁰ When discussing a marriage between his younger sister Tiemulun and Botu, Chinggis remarks, "To decide a marriage based only on the amount of wealth is almost like merchant's conduct."¹¹ Holmgren has obviously realized this exception, and therefore she adds that it does not follow that the bride's family in early Mongol society gave little or nothing at the time of marriage. Yet she argues that the value of property given by the woman's family was overshadowed by costs borne by the groom and his family.

Holmgren poses some hypotheses regarding the marriage customs in early Mongol society, the social position of Chinggis Khan's father, as well

⁸ Jennifer Holmgren, "Imperial Marriage in the Native Chinese and Non-Han State, Han to Ming," *Marriage and Inequality in China*, edited by Rubie Watson, and Patricia Buckley Ebrey, University of California Press, (1991): 58-96.

⁹ Jennifer Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage and Inheritance Practices in Early Mongol and Yuan Society, with Particular Reference to the Levirate," *Journal of Asian History*, vol. 20, (1986): 127-192.

¹⁰ Zhaqi Siqin (Sechin Jagchid), *Menggu mishi xinyi bing zhushi*, Lianjing Chuban Youxian Gongsì, (1979): 101, 115,

¹¹ *Yuanshi*, 118:3921. See the Biography of Botu.

as other topics, to fit the facts into the theory she employs. However, some of the hypotheses are dubious. For example, to support her bride-price theory she tried various means to prove that Chinggis Khan's father, Yesügei, was from a lower ranking family.

First of all, Holmgren claims that, in Mongol society, it was customary for the father to escort the daughter to the husband's camp as a sign that the marriage agreement had been fulfilled. The example she gives is Ambaqa, an early leader of the Tayichi'ut-Kiyat confederation, who, according to the *Secret History*, was seized by the Tartar Juyin people on the way to hand over his daughter to her husband, and was escorted to the Jin for execution.¹² On the other hand, according to Riasanovsky, the live-in son-in-law phenomenon occurred amongst the poor and was restricted to the pre-marriage state.¹³ Based on these, Holmgren raises hypotheses regarding the position of Chinggis' father Yesügei in his tribe and the marriage of Chinggis to Borte. One argument she poses is as following:

If, in Mongol society, it was customary for father to escort daughter to the husband's camp upon completion of the marriage contract, and if the live-in son-in-law phenomenon was a strategy used by the poor as a substitute for bride-price, then a question of fundamental importance arises about the status of Chinggis Khan's family in the Tayichi'ut-Kiyat confederation to which he belonged. It is often assumed that Chinggis' father, Yesügei, held a position of importance, if not the leadership itself, of that confederation. Yet apart from the fact that Yesügei is given as nephew of a former leader, the *Secret History* provides no solid grounds for such an assumption.¹⁴

This assumption is questionable. First of all, it seems not a well-established custom in Mongol society for a father to escort his daughter to his son-in-law's camp. We have not discovered any evidence indicating that this was an obligatory step in Mongol marital customs. It has never been mentioned as one of the Mongol marital customs in any of the books introducing Mongol social customs. Therefore it was probably only an individual phenomenon. As for the fact that Ambaqa Khan was captured by the Tartar people and sent to the Jin court, Rashid Al-din provided a detailed

¹² *The Secret History*, ch. 1: 10.

¹³ Riasanovsky, Valentin A. *Fundamental Principles of Mongol Law*. Reprint. Bloomington: Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series, (1965): 239. quoted in Jennifer Holmgren, "Observation on Marriage....," *Journal of Asian History* 20 (1986): 132.

¹⁴ Jennifer Holmgren, "Observation on Marriage....," *Journal of Asian History* 20 (1986): 132.

but different record: he went to the Tartar tribe to propose marriage for himself rather than to escort his daughter to her husband's.¹⁵

With regard to the marriage contract between Chinggis and Borte and the attitude of Dei Sechen towards their union, we find two conflicting records. Rashid al-Din's work tells us that when Temujin grew up, he went to Dei Sechen's home to claim his betrothed wife, but Dei-Sechen objected. It was only through the help of Borte's brother that the two were finally united.¹⁶ Rashid did not mention why Dei Sechen objected to this marriage. But Holmgren maintains that it was because Chinggis never completed his period of service as a live-in son-in-law with Borte's family and strictly speaking was not entitled to marry Borte.¹⁷ However, on the contrary, *The Secret History* tells us that Dei-Sechen was very happy when Temujin went to his home to claim Borte. "When Dei Sechen, seeing Temujin and rejoicing exceedingly, spake, having said, 'knowing that they Tayichi'ud brethren are jealous, being very troubled, [I] had lost hope. And now [I] have hardly seen thee,' having united Borte Üjin [with him], he accompanied [her]"¹⁸

Holmgren argues that it is unlikely that a man of wealth and good standing in his community would set out virtually alone to seek a wife for his son as Yesügei had done; it is even more unlikely that he would have left that son with the father of the bride. Because such is the behavior of a poor man unable to meet normal bride-price requirements.¹⁹ However, it seems not a problem for a nobleman to travel alone to seek a wife for his son in ancient Mongol society. Ambaqa, as honorable as a Khan, had to personally go to the Tartar tribe to seek a wife, or, as recorded elsewhere, escorted his daughter to her husband, without enough guards.

¹⁵ Rashiduuddin Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh, Compendium of Chronicles, a history of the Mongols*, trans. by W. M. Thackston, Harvard University, Part two, (1998): 129-30. "Hambaqai Qa'an, the grandson of Charaqa Lingqum, the son of [Sorqaduqtu China], who was then the ruler of the Tayichi'ut tribe, went to the Tartar tribes in order to choose one of their daughters for himself. They were offended, saying, "How can he ask for our daughters like this?" and seized him and several of his liege men. Since they were followers of and obedient to the Altan Khan, they sent him there, and the Altan Khan ordered, as was their custom, that he be nailed to a wooden donkey until he died."

¹⁶ Rashiduuddin Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh, Compendium of Chronicles, a history of the Mongols*, trans. by W. M. Thackston, Harvard University, Part one, (1998): 85: "Genghis Khan asked for her (Borte) as a very young man, but her father objected strongly. Since Elchi Noyan had a friendship with Genghis Khan, he endeavored to give him his sister."

¹⁷ Jennifer Holmgren, "Observation on Marriage....", *Journal of Asian History* 20 (1986): 133.

¹⁸ *The Secret History*, ch. 2:32.

¹⁹ Jennifer Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage....", *Journal of Asian History* 20 (1986): 132-33.

Holmgren suggests that the bride-price system assured that ordinary Mongols rarely had more than one wife and that levirate was undoubtedly a wide-spread institution amongst the middle and lower ranks of the society where it was a means of protecting the economic and social integrity of the family.²⁰ Based on these assumptions, she argues that the status of Yesügei, must have been lowly, because he had only two wives, at least one of whom was captured rather than purchased or inherited.²¹ Moreover, she believes that the fate of Yesügei's wives after his death is also indicative of lowly status. Because Yesügei's widows were not taken in marriage by his brother or any other relative.²² According to her assumption,

Had Yesügei been leader of his Kiyat branch of the clan or chief of the Tayichi'-ut-Kiyat confederation, his wives would probably have been taken in marriage by his successor to legitimize the transfer of power. At the very least, had they commanded a reasonable portion of property, they would have remained in the clan as single heads of independent nuclear units. The treatment meted out to the family suggests not so much a political coup by the Tayichi'ut to take control of the Kiyat, but rather that Yesügei and his immediate relatives had neither wealth nor position and that for this reason his kin were unable or unwilling to look after this widow and children. With this in mind, we must interpret that passage in the Secret History which describes the defection of Yesügei's people to the Tayichi'ut as referring not the Kiyat as a whole but merely to the few prisoners of war Yesügei had taken. Alternatively, the passage may be pure fiction designed to embellish the hardships suffered by the young Chinggis after his father's death."²³

In the same article Holmgren states that it was mandatory for a widow to stay in her husband's clan in Mongol society, and it was particularly crucial in the middle and lower ranks of the society where widows were less able to survive on their own, and where, if left to their own devices, they might contract a second marriage to outsiders.²⁴ So, if Yesügei was actually in a lowly position, then his widow should have been taken by one of his relatives since it was obligatory. Since she was not taken by any of Yesügei's relatives, then Yesügei might not belong to the lower rank class.

However, Holmgren suddenly changes her evaluating criteria from bride-price theory to political theory, and states that if Yesügei was leader of his Kiyat branch of the clan or chief of the Tayichi'-ut-Kiyat confederation, his wives would probably have been taken in marriage by his successor to

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 134.

²³ J. Holmgren "Observations on Marriage...." *Journal of Asian History*, 20 (1986): 135.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, In the same article (pp. 134-5) Holmgren attempts to prove that Yesügei was of lowly social status instead of a tribal chieftain in Mongol society.

legitimize the transfer of power. Following this logic, since Yesügei's widow was not taken by his relatives in both cases, Yesügei's social status is actually uncertain.

It is without question that Chinggis' father Yesügei was born into an aristocratic family. Yesügei's grandfather Khabul (and elder uncle Khutula) were both Mongol Khans.²⁵ Yesügei was titled Ba'atur (warrior). He was a powerful Mongol nobleman. But it does not necessarily mean that he was very wealthy. In nomadic societies, wealth was signified by horses, cattle and sheep. While sheep were the most important subsistence animals and mainstay of Inner Asia pastoralism, it was the horse that held pride of place among the step nomads.²⁶ After the death of Yesügei, his widows and sons were abandoned by his subjects. The only property they possessed then were nine horses. The number of cattle and sheep is unclear. They were certainly not wealthy, and they had led an extremely hard life. We may assume that their wealth must have not been limited to only nine horses when Yesügei was alive. *The Secret History* tells us that when the Tayichi'ut people left Hö'elun and her children in the camp and moved away, an old man named Charaqa tried to stop them, but a man named Tödö'en Girté said: "The deep water hath dried up. The bright stone is broken to pieces!"²⁷ which implied that their leader, Yesügei, has died, and they had nothing left. Tödö'en Girté even stabbed and wounded Charaqa. When Temujin went to see Charaqa, the old man said: "When, taking [with them] the people which had been assembled by thy good father and the people of us all, they were taking journey, as I was admonishing [them], it was so done [unto me]." When Hö'elun learned this, she immediately seized the great army banner, leapt upon her horse, and pursued those who had deserted her. She was able to force half of her people to return. But soon they too slipped away and left Hö'elun behind with her children.²⁸ According to a footnote of Sechin Jaqchid in *Menggu mishi xinyi bing zhushi*, the great army banner was called "toghlaju-togh".²⁹ It signified the patron saint of the whole clan in early Mongol society; therefore, Hö'elun tried to use it to persuade her betrayed

²⁵ See *The Secret History*, 10-11.

²⁶ Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empire and China*, 221 BC to AD 1757, Blackwell Publishers, (1989). p. 21.

²⁷ *The Secret History*, 20.

²⁸ Zhaqi Siqin, *Menggu Mishi Xin Yi Bing Zhushi*, PP. 74-75.

²⁹ It was also called "Ejen sulde". According to the footnote in Henry Serruys' "Two Remarkable Women in Mongolia" (*Asia Major*, vol. XIX/part2, pp. 191-245), the flag, sulde, was the seat of the protector or ruler. The flag was not only a religious object, it was also a symbol of the ruler's power. See also Serruy' paper "Mongol Prayer to the Sprit of Cinggis-qan's Flag", in L. Ligeti (ed.) *Mongolian Studies*, pp. 527-35.

subjects. This story clearly indicates the social position Yesügei had held in Mongol society. In fact, Yesügei had a noble title, and was brave in war, so he must have plundered a lot of people and cattle from other tribes in wars. It was highly probable that the Tayi'chi-ut people had taken away not only his people, but also a huge part of his property when they abandoned his family.

It is difficult, however, to decide whether Yesügei was the tribal chief of Tayichi'ut, although he has been given this title in many studies.³⁰ *The Secret History* records that after Ambaqa Khan was captured by the Tartar people and was killed by the Jin Emperor, his people of Mongol-Tayichi'ut held an emergency assembly at the Onon River and elected Khutula as their new Khan.³¹ Khutula launched thirteen attacks upon the Tartars to revenge Ambaqa. Yesügei was one of the major commanders in these battles. D'Ohsson's *Historie des Mongols* states: "When Ambaqa died, his clansmen tried to revenge him. His son Khada'an-Taisi and Khabul Khan's son Khubilai (Coubilai) Khan (i.e. Khutula), Khabul Khan's grandsons and Chinggis Khan's father Yesügei Bartur, tried to jointly attack on Jurchen. Khubilai was the bravest amongst his brothers, and therefore he succeeded Khabul as Khan."³² In *The Secret History of Mongols*, Yesügei was called Bartur, not Khan. However, according to the records in the *Yuanshi* it seems that Yesügei had succeeded the Khanate of the Mongol-Tayichi'ut: "After Gebulü Khan (i.e. Khabul Khan), his son Bartan succeeded to him; after Bartan died, his son Yesügei succeeded to him."³³ It is somewhat unclear here if Yesügei had succeeded to the throne. He might have only inherited his father's noble title (Ba'atur) and property. According to the *Secret History*, Yesügei's father Bartan was the only one who had the title Ba'atur among his seven brothers. Yesügei also was the only one who held the title "Bartur" among his four brothers.³⁴ In any case, it seems no doubt that Yesügei held an important position of Mongol nobleman, probably a chieftain of one of the sub-tribes in the Mongol confederation.

Holmgren further extends her assumption that Dei Sechen of the Onggirat tribe must also have been in a lower social status in order to match her theory. "If we assume that Yisugei's status was a lowly one, a question then arises about Dei-sechen's motives in agreeing to the match, for at that time, his Onggirat tribe was one of the most powerful groups in north-eastern

³⁰ See for example, Ebrey, Patricia Buckley, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, (1996): 169, which states that Yisügei was a tribal chieftain.

³¹ Zhaqi Siqin (Jagchid Sechin), *Monggu Mishi Xinyi Bing Zhushi*, (1979): 54.

³² D'Ohsson, Constantin d'baron, *Historie des Mongols (Duosang Meggu shi)*, (1964): 39.

³³ *Yuanshi*, juan 1, p. 3.

³⁴ Sechin Jagchid (Zhaqi Siqin), *Monggu mishi xinyi bing zhushi*, (1979): 40-43.

Mongolia. On the more practical side, it must be recognized that there is no evidence that Dei-Sechen held a place of importance in the Onggirat at the time of marriage.³⁵ According to the investigation of Bailadugeqi many sub-tribes had derived from the Onggirat tribe up to the twelfth century, and since Dei Sechen was the chieftain of the Bosqur tribe, a sub-tribe of Onggirat tribe,³⁶ there should be no doubt that Dei Sechen had held a place of importance in the Onggirat tribe. When the leaders of the eleven tribes assembled at Alqui Spring, plotting to attack Chinggis Khan and Ong Khan, it was Dei Sechen who sent a messenger to Chinggis Khan to warn him of the impending attacks. *The Secret History* tells us that the leaders of the Onggirat tribe, Dergeg, Emel, Alqui, and others participated in the assembly.³⁷ Dei Sechen might have also been one of them.

With regard to levirate marriage in ancient Mongol society, Rossabi's study indicates that the wives of Mongol Khans and nobles were exceptions to levirate marriage. Rossabi found that several renowned women, though relatively young when they were widowed, never remarried. Instead they reared their children and managed households on their own.³⁸ The two famous women he gives as examples are Chinggis Khan's mother Hö'elun and Khubilai Khan's mother Sorghaghtani-Beki. However, although Hö'elun was not taken by one of her husband's relatives, she was later remarried to Menglik Ecige, the old servant of Yesügei, the father of the famous shaman, Kokochü, of the Qongqotad clan by the arrangement of Chinggis Khan. "He (Menglik Echige) was always with Genghis Khan, in good times and bad. Genghis Khan gave him his mother, Ö'älün Ekä."³⁹ When Rashid compared Sorghaghtani-Beki with Hö'elun, he commented,

And just as, when Chinggis Khan was left an orphan by his father, his mother, Hö'elun Eke, trained him and all the army, sometimes even going into battle herself and equipping and maintaining them until Chinggis Khan became independent and absolute, and attained to the degree of world-sovereignty, and accomplished great things thanks to his mother's endeavors, so too Sorghaghtani-Beki followed the same path in the training of her children. It is said, however, that in one respect she was more long-suffering than the mother of Chinggis Khan and won the palm from

³⁵ J. Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage....", *Journal of Asian History* 20 (1986): 134.

³⁶ Bailadugeqi "Hongjilabu yu Dexuechan" (Onggirat Tribe and Dei-sechen), in *Menggu Shi Lunwen Xuanji*. (1983): 255-70.

³⁷ *The Secret History*, 68.

³⁸ Morris Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family," *Studia Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift Für Herbert Franke, Franz Steiner, ed. by Wolfgang Bauer*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, (1979): 154.

³⁹ Rashiduuddin Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh, Compendium of Chronicles, a history of the Mongols*, trans. by W. M. Thackston, Harvard University, Part two, (1998): 89.

her for constancy. After a time Chingiz-Khan gathered from a cryptic remark of his mother that she wanted a husband and he gave her in marriage to Menglik Echige.⁴⁰

Sorghaghtani-Beki was Khubilai's mother, the senior wife of Tolui. The *Yuanshi* only has a very brief biography of her without any account of her activities. Fortunately, Rashid Al-din offered a lengthy description about her.⁴¹ She was portrayed as being "extremely intelligent and able and towered above all the women in the world."⁴² When Tolui died, Ögödei proposed that Sorghaghtani marry his son Güyük. This marital union, as pointed out by Rossabi, had important political considerations. "This marital union would have linked the two main princely families in East Asia and would probably have ensured an orderly succession to the position of Great Khan rather than disputes or even wars between the sons of Ögödei and the sons of Tolui."⁴³ However, Sorghaghtani refused this offer and her refusal was accepted. According to Holmgren, this was done presumably because it would have been unseemly to force the senior widow of an influential man into marriage with one who already had an established set of wives of his own.⁴⁴

A further explanation provided by Holmgren is that after the establishment of the World Empire, the institution of direct succession from father to son began to emerge and develop. With a regularized system of succession, there was no need for the levirate as a political strategy to legitimize the position of the incoming ruler. In addition, that the office of Khan went to a son of the senior wife meant that a more rigid ranking system for wives and sons had to be instituted within the imperial family, and the more rigid the ranking, the greater the difficulty in incorporating the widow into a new family. Thus, Holmgren states, even when the son of the senior wife did not for some reason inherit the political authority of his father, levirate union between the widow and her husband's successor was unlikely to occur.⁴⁵

In "Imperial Marriage in the Native Chinese and Non-Han State, Han to Ming", Holmgren contrasts Han Chinese marriage patterns with those of several non-Han states whose native marriage systems allowed polygamy, the levirate, the marriage of distant agnates and generally fell more on the

⁴⁰ Rahid Al-din, *The Successors*, 4:168-9.

⁴¹ Op.cit., 4:168-171.

⁴² Op.cit., 4:168.

⁴³ Morris Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family", W, Bauer (ed.), *Studia Sino-Mongolica*, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner, (1979): 160.

⁴⁴ J. Holmgren "Observations on Marriage...". *Journal of Asian History*, 20 (1986): 162-63.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

side of bride-wealth than dowry societies. She finds that the imperial families of these states developed several different marriage systems: the Tuoba of the Northern Wei denying any power to the mothers of Emperors, the Qidan of the Liao marrying exclusively with one Consort clan, and the Mongols of the Yuan marrying with the rulers of allied tribes, preventing their women from gaining control of the throne by allowing succession only to adult sons.⁴⁶

In her analyses, Holmgren also underlines the importance of the imperial marriage of the Mongol Yuan as an exception to the traditional Mongolian marriage system. She suggests that the bride-price system only applied to other levels of Mongol society, but not to the imperial house. In contrast to bride-price systems operating at other levels of Mongol society, the imperial Princess was furnished with a lavish dowry symbolic of her continuing membership in the ruling house.⁴⁷

Holmgren divides the wives of Chinggis Khan and his sons and grandsons into two different groups. The first consists of women (wives and daughters) taken from defeated enemies such as Naiman, Tartar, Tangut, Jurchen and Uduyut-merkit. Marriage ties with most of these groups was a once-only phenomenon. The second group was composed of women (daughters) taken, by way of formal agreement, from allied tribes such as the Onggirat and Ikires.⁴⁸

During the World Empire and the Yuan, the Onggirat clan was the most celebrated of those who maintained a very stable marriage relationship with the Mongol royal family. In 1237 Ögödei Khan declared, "The girls born of the Onggirat tribe should become the Empresses (of Mongol rulers) for generations; the boys born in the Onggirat should marry Princesses (of the Mongols) for generations. This should never be ceased."⁴⁹ This statement may be viewed as evidence for the existence of a two-clan preferential system of marriage in early Mongol society. However, as Holmgren suggests, this decree did not necessarily imply that the members of the Mongol ruling clan would henceforth only take Onggirat women as their senior or principal wives, since during both the World Empire and the Yuan dynasty, marriage ties of the ruling clan were spread over a large number of groups.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ J. Holmgren: "Imperial Marriage..." *Marriage and Inequality in China*, (1991): 58-96.

⁴⁷ Op.cit: 85-6.

⁴⁸ J. Holmgren "Observations on Marriage..." *Journal of Asian History*, 20 (1986): 145.

⁴⁹ YS 118: 2915. See the biography of Dei-Sechen.

⁵⁰ J. Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage..." (1986): 138.

According to the results of a survey carried out by Holmgren on the background of women who married into important branches of the ruling house from Chinggis Khan's time to the end of the Yuan, sixty-nine women could be clearly identified as coming from over twenty different tribal groups or subordinate states, with the Onggirat making up about 33% of these women. When the figures are broken down, the number of Onggirat wives declines to about 20% for the pre-Yuan era and climbs to about 50% for the Yuan, while the number of other groups decreases to about half what it was in the earlier period.⁵¹

Holmgren claims that Onggirat men who married daughters of Yuan rulers or other important members of the royal clan rarely had their own daughters selected as principal wives for the ruling house. Thus Onggirat Empresses were not daughters of Chinggisid Princesses. Rather, they came from lines which had had no previous marriage ties with the throne and no close association with the highest ranks of the Onggirat leadership. Thus, while Yuan Princesses married into and were able to greatly influence, even control, the Onggirat leadership, influential Onggirat leaders were unable to manipulate marriage ties with the royal house to further their own political ambitions for the control of the throne. Holmgren believes that there was a deliberate attempt to maximize the spread of marriage ties to avoid the development of close or exclusive relations with the Onggirat, which might work to the disadvantage of the imperial family.⁵² Holmgren assumes that the official rhetoric stemmed from a desire to appease or compliment the Onggirat tribesmen for, with the rise of Bosqur during Chinggis Khan's day, there had been a major revolution in the leadership of that confederation. Ögödei's declaration may also have been a warning to other tribal leaders that they could expect no great politically advantageous ties with the imperial house.

In the following pages, we should examine more closely the royal marriage patterns of the Mongols both before and after the Yuan dynasty.

⁵¹ *Op.cit.*, 41 (1986): 138.

⁵² *Op.cit.* 41: 139.

CHAPTER TWO

The Origins and Development of Mongolian Marital Traditions and the Characteristics of the Mongolian Royal Marriages

Mongolian Exo-tribal (Exogamic) Marriage

When we observe the marriages of the Mongolian tribes from the period of the eleventh to the thirteenth century, we find many distinctive features. In this period, the basic social unit of the Mongol society was the *obogh* (clan or tribe), which translates to “particular blood-related alliance,” Each person belonged to a specific tribe. Every member of a Mongol tribe knew that he or she was related in blood with other members of his or her own tribe. They were his or her *urugh/uruh* which means “kinfolk,” “members of the same tribe,” or of “having common ancestry.” All the people in other tribes were called *jad*, which translates to “different race of tribe” or “aliens.”¹ Mongols believed that the people in the same tribe should care for each other, help each other and protect each other. As for *jad*, they must be treated as enemies or wild animals watched with sharp vigilance. And if necessary, they should be plundered and butchered.

However, there were so-called *torgüd* in the *jad*, which means “relatives on the side of wives.” A member of the *torgüd* was not regarded as a member of *jad*; instead, he would have been treated well. People usually called the other party (male) *huda*. If the relationship of *huda* had been established, both parties would make an agreement to exchange girls as wives of another party. Therefore, in ancient Mongol society, each tribe had a relatively fixed *huda*---or relatives by marriage. This marriage custom was later to be practised by the imperial family in the Yuan dynasty.

¹ B. Y. Wladimirtzov, *Menggu shehui zhidu shi* (trans.) Zhang Xingtang, Wu Zhankun, (1968): 17-20. Liu Rongjun, Gao Wende “Lun Menggu zhubu tongyi qian de shizuzhi canyu,” *Menggushi yanjiu lunwenji*, Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, (1984).

The early Mongols adopted a strict exogamic marriage institution. A man was not allowed to marry a woman from within his own tribe, but instead had to go to another tribe to choose and receive a wife. This marital institution actually existed throughout the whole period of Mongol clan society. Between the eleventh century and thirteenth century, however, Mongol society had adopted a patrilineal clan system, with blood relationship decided only in accordance with the patrilineal relationship. For instance and as an example, the female ancestor (Mo. *emegen*) of the Mongol tribe, Alanquoa had five sons, of whom two were born with her husband Dobun-mergen. Three were born when she was in widowhood, which, according to the Mongolian legend, were fathered by Heaven.² Therefore, the clans that came from Alanquoa's youngest son Boduanchar, including Chinggis Khan's clan, did not believe that they had any blood relationship with the first two sons of Alanquoa, still less would they believe that they had any blood relationship with the other two sons of Alanquoa, who were born during her widowhood. Therefore, the men of Chinggis' clan were able to marry the women of Salji'üd (Salezhiwuti) clan. This clan was the descendant of the fourth son of Alanquoa. However, because the first two sons of Alanquoa were from the same father, definitely there was no marital relationship between them.³

This marital custom was recorded in historical materials. For example, Chinggis Khan and the people of the Qraqin tribe and the Salji'üd tribe were all the descendants of Alanquoa. Thus, when Chinggis attempted to gather people in the Mongol steppes, he sent envoys to these two tribes, saying, "Many tribes which are not our relatives now have joined us, including the Onggirat tribe, the Tartar tribe, and the Dierliejin tribe. And we have become

² *YCMS*, p. 11, translated and annotated by Daorun Tibu, Shenghuo Dushu Xinzhi Sanlian Shudian, (1980). *The Secret History of the Mongols*, translated and edited by Francis Woodman Cleaves, Harvard University Press, (1982): 4: Then their mother Alan quoa spake. She said: "Ye, my two sons, Belgünütei and Bügünütei, doubting of me, talk with each other, saying 'She hath borne these three sons. They are sons of whom and of what?' and your doubting is right.

Every night, a bright yellow man entered by the light of the hole at the top or [by that] of the door top of the tent and rubbed my belly. His light was wont to sink into my belly. When he went out, like a yellow dog he was wont to crawl out by the beams of the sun or moon.

How [can] ye speak [so] rashly?

If one understand by that, [it is evident that]

Its sign is [that]

They are sons of Heaven.

³ Halina, "Shitan gutai Menggu shehui hunyin zhidu," *Neimenggu shehui kexue*, 5 (1989): 102-107.

friends. You and I are blood brothers, let us make an alliance and become friends.”⁴ But the people of these two tribes did not agree and insulted the envoy. Therefore they fought each other for a long time. Finally Chinggis Khan became the winner and killed many of them. The rest of the people in these tribes became his slaves. Some of them submitted to other Mongol tribes. Chinggis Khan then issued an order to his tribesmen, “Do not marry their girls, and also do not give girls in marriage to them; because they still follow the way of consanguinity, which makes them distinctive from other Mongolian tribes.”⁵

Chinggis Khan once sent Turuqajar and Sartahei to conquer the Barhuti tribe led by Hotan-a’in. They formed an alliance and made an agreement, and pledged,

We should be like the people in the same clan who are blood brothers. Just as the Mongols who do not marry girls within their tribe, we should not marry our girls to each other. Each of us should marry girls from the other tribes, and follow the betrothal rules and customs of marriage.⁶

Ögödei Khan admitted that one of the four big mistakes he made in his life was “to hearken unto the word of a woman without principle and to cause [one] to bring the daughters of the *ulus* of Uncle Odchigin were [mine] errors. Although I be the Qahan, Lord of the nation, to deliver myself unto deeds [which were] errors without principle, this was one of my wrongs.”⁷ The women Ögödei took were actually from the Oirat tribe, but at that time they belonged to Odchigin, the younger brother of Chinggis Khan. Therefore they were viewed as the people of Odchigin.

When Chinggis Khan conquered the Merqit tribe, the Tartar tribe, the Keliet tribe, the Naiman tribe, and many other tribes as well as states, he had taken their women as his wives,⁸ because these tribes had no blood relation with Chinggis Khan’s Nilun tribe. While after he defeated the Zhurqi tribe and the Taichiwut tribe, he did not take any women from them, because the

⁴ Rashid al-Din, *Jami’al-Tavarikh* (Collection of Histories) *Shiji* tr., Yu Dajun, Zhou Jianqi, Shanwu Yinshuguan, vol. 1a, (1997): 293-4.

⁵ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:294.

⁶ *Shiji* vol. 1a:272. The translation by W. M. Thackston of this paragraph is very different, however: “We are like brothers and family to one another. Just as the Mongols marry each other’s daughters, we too will so marry, and each of us who marries a girl from another tribe will observe the etiquette of daughter-in-law and son-in-law.” See *Jami’u’t-Tawarikh, Compendium of Chronicles, a history of the Mongols*, trans. by W. M. Thackston, Harvard University, (1998).Pt. one, ch. 4. p. 89.

⁷ *The Secret History*, p.228.

⁸ *Yuanchao mishi*, vol. 3, 5, 7, 10.

people of Zhurqi tribe were also the descendants of Hobule Khan, and the people of the Taichiwut tribe were also the descendants of Khaidu. However, since they had been the enemies of Chinggis Khan, they suffered his wrath. Chinggis Khan “killed all the descendants of Awuchu Batur of the Taichiwut.” and captured the people of the Zhurqi tribe and made them his slaves.⁹ From these examples we can see that although the members of the same tribe could become enemies, they still knew that they had to comply with the tradition of external-tribal marriage. Thus, for the purpose of avoiding consanguineous marriage and the multiplication of the tribal population, it was undoubtedly an important device for the existence of their own tribe.

Consanguineous Marriage and Inbreeding in the Mongol Royal Family

The practice of exogamy was obviously designed to avoid consanguineous marriage and to prevent inbreeding, and the early Mongols seemed to be very aware of this. However, the Mongols did not know that they should also avoid consanguineous marriages between two different tribes. This could happen if the two tribes maintained a constant marital relationship, such as those between the Mongol royal family and Dei Sechan's family of the Onggirat tribe. The Mongol royal family had maintained a stable marital relationship with the nobles of the Onggirat tribe since the time of Chinggis Khan, and it lasted until the extinction of the Yuan dynasty. As we will see, consanguineous marriages had occurred since the time of Khubilai Khan, and its negative consequences had become gradually more obvious. Because of the consanguineous marriage and inbreeding, the population quality of the Mongol royal family decreased rapidly, and many Princes and Princesses were born unhealthy and did not live long.

Mongol men were allowed to marry almost all of their female relatives except their own mothers, daughters, and sisters, and marriages between cousins were very common and normal. Grandfathers, fathers, and sons might marry the sisters of the same generation. All of these had happened in the Mongolian royal clan, which made the affinity within the royal clan extremely complicated. For instance, three of the four daughters of Zha'a-qianbo, the younger brother of Ong Khan, were taken by Chinggis Khan and his sons. The eldest one was taken by Chinggis Khan himself; the second one was married to his eldest son Jochi; the third one, Sorghaghtani-Beki,

⁹ *Yuanchao mishi*, vol. 5, p. 4.

became the wife of Tolui, the mother of Khubilai Khan. Emperor Taiding married Sadabala the daughter of his own elder sister, Princess of Shouning

After an investigation on the ages of the Mongol Khans and Emperors, I have found that from the times of the *Yeke Mongol Ulus* to the Yuan dynasty, the life spans of the members of the Mongol royal family decreased rapidly, and I conclude that these consanguineous marriages played a part in shortening their life-spans.

Let us first look at the life spans of the Mongol Khans and the Yuan Emperors. For the four Mongol Khans in the time of *Yeke Mongol Ulus*, Chinggis Khan died when he was 66 years old, Ögödei Khan died at 56 years old, Güyük Khan died at 43, and Möngke Khan died at 52. Among the Emperors of the Yuan dynasty, Khubilai lived the longest, 80 years. Temür (Chengzong) died at 42, Qaishan (Wuzong) died at 31, Ayurbarvada (Renzong) died at 36, Shidebala (Yingzong) died at 21, Yisün-Temür (Emperor Taiding) died at 36. Furthermore, Qoshila (Mingzong) died at 30, Tuq-Temür (Wenzong) died at 29, Irinjibal (Ningzong) died at 7, and Toqon-Temür (Shundi) died at 51. Among these, Güyük Khan, Shidebala, and Qoshila did not die naturally. They died or murdered, because of the internal political struggles of the Mongol royal family. Except for Khubilai, none lived as long as Chinggis Khan. Many of them were afflicted with chronic illness throughout their lives, and were even unable to fulfill their daily duties. For example, Chengzong was so ill that he had to trust his Empress Bulughan to handle governmental affairs for him.¹⁰ Wuzong, Renzong and Wenzong also suffered from ill-health.

It is not necessary to analyze all the marriages in the Mongol royal family. In the following I will give examples of the intricate affinity between Khubilai's family and his principal wife Chabui Khatun's family. We will see that consanguineous marriages were indeed very common and their consequences were serious.

Dei Sechan was the father-in-law of Chinggis Khan, the maternal grandfather of Tolui. Dei Sechan had three sons, Anchen, Huohu, and Ce. Anchen had three sons, the eldest son was Chigu, the second son was Wochen, the third son was Nachen. Chigu married the third daughter of Chinggis Khan, Tumanlun. Wochen married Tolui's Daughter Yesubuhua in the tenth year of Ögödei's reign (1238); Nachen married Princess of the State

¹⁰YS 114: 2873, see *Houfei zhuan*, "Chengzong was always ill. The Empress mediated among different parties to handle the imperial affairs. People all praised the government of the Dade era as smooth and fair. It was handled by this Empress."

of Lu Xuezhigan, the granddaughter of Chinggis Khan, but her father is unknown.¹¹

Khubilai married three women from Dei Sechan's family. One was Chabui, the daughter of Anchen; one was Tiegulun the daughter of Tuolian (Anchen's grandson). The other was Nanbui, the daughter of Nachen's grandson Xiantong. Note that Khubilai's daughter Tumanlun was married to Anchen's son Chigu, Khubilai's another daughter Nangjiazhen was married to Nachen's son Woluochen, who later remarried Woluochen's younger brother Tiemur and then remarried Woluochen's nother younger brother Manzitai. Ögödei's daughter Suorhahan married Anchen's grandson Nahe.¹²

Chabui Khatun gave birth to four sons. None of them were healthy, and all died young. Her first son Dorji died early and had no descendants.¹³ Her second son, the Crown Prince Jin Gim was very weak in health, and finally died when he was forty-three years old, leaving three unhealthy sons, Kamala, Tarmabala, and Temür Khan. The eldest son of Jin Gim, Kammala died at forty; the second son, Darmabala, died at twenty-nine; and the third son, Temür (Öljeitü) Khan, died at forty-two.

Tarmabala had three sons. The eldest son was Amoga, Prince of Wei. His death date is unknown. But he probably died early because he was not involved in the political struggles for the throne with his younger brothers. The second son was Qaishan Khan (Wuzong, r.1307-1311), who died at thirty-one; the third son was Ayurbarvada (Renzong, r. 1312-1320) who died at thirty-six.

Amoga's three daughters were married to the Koryō kings and they all died very young. The Senior Princess the State of Cao, Kimdong was married to the King Wang To in around 1326 and died one year later when she was only eighteen years old; her sister, Princess of Qing-hua Bayan Khudu, succeeded her and married Wang To in 1333 and died in 1344 when she was about twenty-seven years old. Another daughter of Amoga, Princess Supreme-of-State of Lu, Botasirin, was married to King Kongmin, Wang Ki, and died at about thirty-two.

From Temür (Öljeitü) Khan, the quality of the Mongol royal clan began to decline, and many Princes died very young. For example, the son of Chengzong, Deshou, was born of Shiliandali, the daughter of Woluochen.

¹¹ YS 109: 2757-60, see *Gongzhu Biao*.

¹² YS 118: 2915-21, see "De Xuechan"; 109: 2757-60, *Gongzhu Biao*.

¹³ Rashid Al-din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. by John A. Boyle, Columbia University Press, (1971): 242: "He did not marry and had no issue. He was older than Abaqa Khan. He was always sickly and ill and died of that chronic illness." Rashid Al-din, as a doctor, probably had sensed the common hereditary disease in the Mongol royal clan, therefore he mentioned it as "that chronic illness."

Deshou was designated as the heir apparent in the sixth month of the ninth year of Dade (1305). But he died in the twelfth month of the same year. In addition, the second son of Renzong, Wudusibuhua, the four sons of Emperor Taiding, the three sons of Wenzong, and the two sons of Shundi, all died very young.

The “Table of the Imperial Clan Genealogy” in the *Yuanshi* has the following records, which may help us understand the consequences of consanguineous marriage and inbreeding in the Mongol imperial clan.

Emperor Chengzong had one son, the Crown Prince Deshou, who died early and had no children.

Emperor Wuzong had two sons. The elder one was the Emperor Mingzong; and the younger one was the Emperor Wenzong.

Emperor Renzong had two sons. The elder one was the Emperor Yingzong; and the younger one was Wudusi-buhua, Prince of An, who died early without children.

Emperor Yingzong had no children.

Emperor Taiding had four sons. The elder one was Alijiba, the Crown Prince; the second one was Badima-yirjianpu, the Prince of Jin; the third one was Prince Xiaoxue; the fourth one was Prince Yundan-zangbu. They all died young and had no children.

Emperor Mingzong had two sons. The elder one was the Emperor Shun; and the second one was the Emperor Ningzong.

Emperor Wenzong had three sons. The elder one was Alatenadala, the Crown Prince, who died early without children. The second one was Prince Yantiegusi; the third one was Prince Taipingna. They all died early without children.

Emperor Ningzong died early without children.

Emperor Shun had three sons. The eldest one was Aiyushilidala. The other two died early.¹⁴

The early deaths of royal family members were so frightening for the survivors that all of them became very superstitious. They believed deeply in curses and retribution and turned to religions for refuge. In addition, to protect their sons from these mishaps, they chose to entrust their children to the care of other people. For example, Khubilai's third son Mangqala born of Chabui, married Anchen's niece Khutui, and had three sons. When Mangqala found that many of his children died very young, he decided to hand over his son, Ananda, to a Turkistan Muslim called Mihtar Aqtachi to bring him up.¹⁵ Wenzong's Empress Buda-shili bore two sons: Alatenadana who was titled Prince of Yan, and Guna-dala. In the twelfth month of 1330 Wenzong designated Anatena-dana as the heir-apparent. But in the second month of

¹⁴ *YS* 107:2729.

¹⁵ *Shiji* vol. 2, p. 379. *The Successors*, 8:323.

1331, the Crown Prince died. Wenzong was so frightened that he decided to entrust his second son, Guna-dala, to the care of the chief-minister Yantie-mur, and changed his son's name to Yantie-gusi. Both Wenzong and Buda-shili were very superstitious. The death of the Crown Prince made them believe that they were being repaid for the murders of Mingzong and his wife Babusha. Quan Heng in *Genshen waishi* records that when Wenzong was about to die in 1332, he admitted that the murder of his brother Mingzong was the most serious mistake in his whole life, and he regretted it deeply.¹⁶ His last Will was to transfer the throne to Mingzong's son. "The throne originally belonged to Mingzong, if you love me, please recall Mingzong's son Tuohuan-tiemur (Toghan-Temür) and let him ascend the throne, so that when I meet Mingzong in the nether world, I can tell him that and fob him off with some lame excuse."¹⁷

Wenzong's mother Daji was the daughter of Hundu-tiemuer, the grandson of Anchen. Wenzong's Empress Buda-shiri was the daughter of Diao'a-bula. Diao'a-bula was the son of Tiemur. Tiemur married Khubilai's daughter Nangjiazhen. Tiemur was the son of Wuoluochen, Wuoluochen was the son of Nachen, and Nachen was the son of Anchen.¹⁸

Out of fear of sudden death, the Mongol royal family members tried to seek protection in religion, and Buddhism became popular in the imperial clan throughout the Yuan dynasty. All Mongol Emperors spent large amounts of money on temple construction and Buddhist ceremonies. For example, Emperor Taiding once granted twenty thousand *ding* of cash and one thousand *qing* of land to a temple called Da tianyuan yansheng si.¹⁹ The

¹⁶ Quan Heng, *Gengshen waishi* (GSWS), in *Yuandai biji xiaoshuo*, vol. 3, Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe, (1994): 513.

¹⁷ GSWS, p.513. Mingzong had two sons. The elder son was Toghan-Temür born of Mailaidi; the younger son was Yilian-zhiban (Irinjibal) born of Empress Babusha. When Mingzong was murdered, Yilian-zhiban was only four years old. He came to Dadu together with his mother. Wenzong liked Yilian-zhiban and allowed him and his mother to live in the palace. Later Wenzong's Empress Budashili killed Babusha who had complained about the death of her husband. They also announced that Toghan-Temür was not Mingzong's son, and sent him into exile in Korea, and later moved him to Guangxi. Yilian-zhiban was brought up in the Yuan palace. (see Wang Gang, *Zhongguo Yuandai zhengzhi shi*. (1994): 138.

¹⁸ Please refer to Chapter 6, Tables 3-4: "The Empresses of Yuan from the Onggirat tribe" and "The Princesses of Yuan Court Married into Onggirat Tribe" for details.

¹⁹ *YS* 30: 674. The ministers of the Secretarial Council pointed out, "The supplies for armies and common people must rely on the production of lands. Shizu built temples such as *Da xuan wen hong jiao* Temple and granted them permanent land properties, which were deemed then to be unnecessary expenses. However, Chengzong again built *Tianshou wanning* Temple, and spent twice as much as Shizu. Others like Wuzong's building

Tibetan monks (*xifan seng*) became very powerful in the Yuan court. Qaishan (Wuzong) issued a decree stipulating that, for those who assaulted Tibetan monks, their hands should be cut off; for those who swore at Tibetan monks, their tongues should be cut out.²⁰

From Khubilai Khan to the last Yuan Emperor Shundi, virtually all the Yuan Emperors were initiated into monkhood through official ceremonies. During the reigns of Emperor Taiding, Wuzong, and Wenzong, the most commonly conducted Buddhist ceremony was to chant the “Sutra of Eternal Life” (*Dasheng wuliangshou jing*).²¹ However, none of them lived a long life. Emperor Taiding received the Buddhist commendation of “eternal life” from the Emperor’s teacher in the third month of 1328, and ordered one thousand monks to pray for him. But, he died in the seventh month of the same year.²²

In addition to consanguineous marriage, there were other reasons for early death in the royal family. Political assassination was certainly one of them. There is ample evidence that several Mongol Khans and Yuan Emperors were murdered or poisoned by their political opponents. Additionally, some of the other factors often suggested are their inability to adapt to the new climate of China, indulgence in excessive drinking and sensual pleasure. But, consanguineous marriage and inbreeding was probably the key factor. The two-clan preferential marriage system was definitely a hotbed of inbreeding, which formed a vicious circle, and eventually led to a weakening of the genetic pool and the generalized ill-health of the Mongol royal family.

The early deaths of the Crown Princes usually aroused internal political struggles in the Mongol royal family, which reduced the strength of the Mongol superpower, and the leadership of the Mongol royal family became weaker and weaker. At times they could not find any suitable males to govern the empire, so that Empresses, Empress-dowagers, and powerful ministers constantly dominated the Yuan court. Finally, the last Emperor of

Chongen fuyuan, Renzong’s building *Chenghua puqing*, were even worse because they had to use the incomes of rent and monopolies. Yingzong leveled off hilltops to build temples, which injured soldiers and farmers, and eventually they were not profitable. Lands are from our ancestors. Descendants should treasure them. We are afraid that later (the monks) will use the lands as excuses to improperly start constructions, and use payer “pray for blessings” as an excuse to satisfy their personal desires. We wish your Majesty to reconsider this decision.”

²⁰ YS 23:512.

²¹ *Dasheng wuliangshou jing* (Sutra of Infinite Life), sometimes referred to as the Longer Amitabha Sutra, is one of the five most important Sutras in Pure Land Study.

²² YS 30: 685-87.

Yuan, the Shundi Toqon Temür, whose Mongol blood was controversial, ascended to the throne, and brought the Mongol empire to its end. Therefore, since consanguineous marriage and inbreeding contributed to the extinction of the Mongol rule in China, this is a subject worthy of study.

Typical Patterns of Mongolian Royal Marriages: “One Way” Marriages and “Two Way” Marriages

In investigating the imperial marriages of the Mongol Yuan, I have found six tribes or states that had relatively stable or even regularized marriage relationships with the family of Chinggis Khan. Dei Sechen’s clan of the Onggirat tribe was the most favorable marriage partner of the Mongol royal family. In addition, Ikires tribe, Öngüt tribe, Oirat tribe, Idug-qut’s clan of the Uighur state, and the Koryō (Korean) royal family also maintained stable marriage relationships with the Mongol royal family.

The six clans can be divided into two categories according to the characteristics of their intermarriage relationships with the Mongol royal family. One form may be called a two-way marriage relationship, the other a one-way marriage relationship. The Onggirat tribe, Ikires tribe and Oirat tribe will be put into the first category since they both had women who became the Empresses or Imperial Concubines of the Mongol Yuan royal family, and they also had men married to the Princesses of the Mongol royal family. As for the other three tribes, although their women did not enjoy the honor of marrying Emperors, their men did constantly have the privilege of marrying the Princesses of the Mongol Yuan.

This phenomenon may be explained if we relate it to the four social classes determined by the Mongol Yuan rulers. As Mongol tribes, the Onggirat, Ikires tribes, and Oirat tribe all belonged to the highest rank; the Öngüt tribe and Uighur Idug-qut tribe belonged to the second class as they were considered to be “*Semu*” (miscellaneous peoples). Koreans were placed in the third social rank as they were classified as “*Hanren*” in the Yuan dynasty, together with the Han Chinese, the Jürgens, and the Khitans that were conquered earlier in northern and southwestern China. The last class is “*Nanren*” or “southerners” or the Chinese of the Southern Song including the people of Dali who were last conquered by the Mongols.

The reason that the Mongol royal family did not choose women from these peoples as Empresses, as suggested by some scholars, might be that they did not want their “noble” blood to be mixed and stained with that of

these tribes.²³ For instance, it is said that Khubilai Khan set up a family rule, excluding his descendents from marrying Korean women. However, the *Koryōsa* records that Khubilai once issued a decree to the Koryō court, requiring it to send Korean Princess to him to symbolize its submission, but the Koryō court eventually declined this request.²⁴ Therefore, the establishment of a two-way marriage relationship was possibly related to political, social, cultural, and marriage traditions.

Levirate Marriages in the Mongolian Royal Family

Levirate marriage (*shouji hun*) is a type of marriage in which a widowed woman could be taken by one of her husband's relatives. As one of the most distinct characteristics of the Mongol marriage customs, the levirate has attracted the attention of scholars and has been described and extensively discussed.

Mongol custom encouraged the remarriage of widows, but her new husband could be chosen only within her husband's family. Therefore a son sometimes married his father's widow as long as she was not his own mother, and a younger brother was occasionally expected to marry his elder brother's widow (though an elder brother rarely married his younger brother's widow).

In China proper, levirate marriage had long been condemned by the Chinese elite as early as the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 B. C.), in which it was called “*zheng*” (a son marries his step-mother), “*bao*” (a younger brother marries his sister-in-law). This practice was banned officially by law in the Han dynasty (206-220 B. C.). It was condemned as “the behavior of beasts. It confuses human relations, and it goes against the heavenly rules. The punishment should be death.”²⁵

According to the seniority of the successor and the succeeded (the widow) in a family or a clan, levirate marriage can be classified into two major categories: the two parties in a levirate marriage were in the same generation, such as a younger brother who by succession married his elder brother's wife, or an elder brother who took the wife of his deceased younger brother. The other is that the two parties in a levirate marriage were in different generations. This was called cross-generation levirate marriage,

²³ For instance, see Xiao Qiqing, “Yuan Li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin yu qiangquan zhengzhi” *Yuandaishi xintan* Xin Wen Feng Chuban Gongsi, (1983).

²⁴ Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian. P. 524.

²⁵ See the biography of Yanwang (Prince of Yan Liu Ze, in *Hanshu*, juan 35, quoted in Zhang Bangwei, *Hunyin yu shehui*, Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe (1989): 58.

such as the case where a son inherited his father's widowed concubine, a nephew married the widowed wife or concubine of his uncle, a grandson married his successive paternal grandmother and so on.²⁶ However, of all types of levirate marriage, three types were most popular: a son married his father's widowed concubine (or stepmother); a nephew married his widowed aunt; and a younger brother married his widowed sister-in-law.

Several scholars have examined the conditions necessary for the optimum operation of levirate in early Mongol society both before and during the Yuan, and the most common explanation is that a woman found it difficult to manage a household by herself and needed remarriage to secure her survival. Lacking the assistance of a man to share the workload, she might not be able to support and maintain her children and family. Remarriage with her dead husband's younger brother or son would keep the family together, and preservation of the family was, from the Mongol standpoint, laudable;²⁷ The Mongols condemned remarriage outside the family or clan because "a widow would be claimed by her former husband in the next life."²⁸

Levirate marriage also had strong economic implications. Herbert Franke points out that marriage in the Yuan dynasty was a contract between families and not between individuals. The wife was regarded after her marriage as a piece of family property. The economic implications of the custom of levirate are, of course, that the wife's dowry and the betrothal presents should remain in the husband's family and not go to a third family.²⁹

In Holmgren's opinion, levirate seems to be simply a direct result of economic considerations. She argues that levirate marriage operates most commonly in conjunction with bride-price rather than with the type of dowry system prevalent in early Chinese society: if the bride's family have been adequately compensated for loss of the woman, then her natal relatives have little or no further claim on her labor and economic potential, and little say in her subsequent marital status. Any future marriage transactions involving the woman are the concern of the husband's family. The latter decides whether

²⁶ Dong Jiazun, *Zhongguo shoujihunshi de yanjiu*, Lingnan Daxue Xi'nan Shehui Jingji Yanjiusuo, (1950). quoted in "Shuo Yuandai de Shoujihun," by Yang Yi, in *Yuanshi Luncong*, Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, (1993).

²⁷ Morris Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and Women in His Family," *Studia Sino-Mongolica*, (1979): 14-15.

²⁸ Henry Serruys, "Remains of Mongol Customs during the Early Ming Period," *The Mongols and Ming-China: Customs and History*. Edited by Francoise Aubin, Variorum Reprints, London (1987): 174.

²⁹ Franke, Herbert. "Women under the Dynasties of Conquest." *La donna nella Cina Imperiale e nella Cina Repubblicana*, (1980): 39.

as widow she remains in the group or is remarried to an outside party. In cases of remarriage out of the family, bride-price is collected not by the woman's relatives but by the family of the late husband. This must be compensated for the expense incurred in obtaining her. Where the cost of obtaining wives is high, the preferred option is for the widow to remain in the group as wife of one of her late husband's relatives since the original bride-price was paid out not by the individual but by the group as a whole.³⁰ On the other hand, because of the physical and legal separation of the husband's share from the parental stem, a wife easily gained control over what remained of her husband's property at the time of his death. That property was the largest share, which has gone to the youngest son after the widow's death. Thus if the widow were to remarry out of the group, it was essential that she first be divested of control over both her dowry and the remaining portion of her husband's property. This, however, involved complex property redistribution within the clan, an act that might lead to disputes and loss of inheritance rights for the youngest son, particularly when that son was still a minor. In this way, continuous residence in the husband's clan in one form or another was mandatory in Mongol society. Holmgren then concludes: the levirate was not so much a strategy for the production of heirs, but rather an economic institution designed to maintain the viability of the family patrimony.³¹

Holmgren also explores another aspect of the levirate as a social strategy by comparing its operations in Mongol society with that in Chinese society. She holds that the levirate marriage can only become a widespread or obligatory institution in a given society in conjunction with polygamy. Where monogamy operates as the legal and socially acceptable form of marriage, levirate will at best be irregular and infrequent unless it be combined with enforced bachelorhood for the younger son. Thus in traditional Chinese society, which operated on the principle of one legal wife (with concubinage), levirate occurred mainly amongst the very poor, those who were unable to afford the cost of marriage for all sons. Up to the Yuan era, widow-remarriage out of the group was the norm for the elite and almost all other classes of Chinese society.

In contrast, Mongol society was polygamous. It also had no restriction on cross-generational marriage. Thus the widow could be incorporated with little difficulty into an established family headed by an adult male with wives of his own. Thus Holmgren concludes that for ordinary Mongols levirate was widely practiced as a strategy for preservation of the social and economic

³⁰ J. Holmgren: "Observations on Marriage..." (1986): 151.

³¹ *Op.cit.*, p. 153.

integrity of the family. First, it provided wives for younger members of the family at no additional cost. Secondly, it provided security for widows with property who were unable to maintain an independent economic unit within the group and who might be forced into remarriage with an outsider for economic reasons. Finally, it reunited separate portions of the family patrimony which had earlier been detached from the base.³²

Levirate marriages in the Mongol royal family, however, did not follow the above pattern. In investigating the occurrence of levirate within the leadership of allied and subordinate tribes during the World Empire, I have found that it was the result of singular political circumstances. Using the cases of Alahai, the daughter of Chinggis Khan, as an example, she first married Alawusi Tijihuli, the head of the Öngüt tribe in 1207, and then remarried the sons of Alawusi in order to maintain Mongol control over the Öngüt tribe.³³

As Holmgren has pointed out, it shows how both levirate and the principle of widow-chastity were manipulated by Chinggisid leaders in their quest for greater domination over allied peoples. Also, the remarriages of Alaha suggest that where Chinggisid control was secure and direct succession could be instituted, widow-chastity was the preferred *modus operandi*. Alahai was married three times---first to the older son of the Öngüt leader, Alaqus, then to Alaqus' nephew, Zhenguo, and finally to Alaqus' younger son, Boyaohe. At one time, she governed the Öngüt as a regent, first in the absence of Zhenguo and then, after Zhenguo's death, as widow in the name of her younger son, Niegutai. Her first marriage had secured the alliance between her father and the Öngüt, but then, her husband and father-in-law were murdered by their own tribesmen. Chinggis Khan was then faced with the problem of installing a successor who would be both loyal to him and able to control the tribesmen. Chinggis Khan thus passed over the young Boyaohe and installed his older cousin Zhenguo as tribe head. To legitimize the succession, and to further Chinggisid control over the Öngüt leadership, Zhenguo was married to Alahai, since Zhenguo's assassination had the potential to create succession problems in the next generation, Boyaohe and his family might challenge the right of Zhenguo's descendants to inherit the leadership. Thus upon Zhenguo's death, Alahai first governed the Öngüt as regent, and then married Boyaohe after his return from a military campaign. In this way, her young son by Zhenguo was forced to wait until the death of his step-father/cousin before he could assume the

³² *Op.cit.*, p. 153.

³³ See Chapter Nine, "One-Way Marriages": The Imperial Marriages Between the Mongol Royal Family and the Öngüt Tribe.

leadership. For this reason, Boyaohe's sons, being children of a lesser wife, were unable to threaten his position.³⁴

It seemed that not all Mongol Princes had the right to inherit their fathers' wives. The Prince who was entitled to take his father's wives was generally the eldest son and/or the heir-apparent. For instance, after Jochi died, his eldest son Orda inherited one of his wives, who was from the Onggirat tribe.³⁵ Orda's grandson Qonichi had been for a long time, the ruler of the *ulus* of Orda. When Qonichi died, his first son Bayan succeeded to his throne, and at the same time married three of his wives: the first, Barquchin, the second, Chingtüm, and the third, Altaju.³⁶

According to Juvaini, Empress Mogo was originally the wife of Chinggis Khan and was succeeded by Ögödei after Chinggis Khan died. This followed the Mongol custom. Chaghatai had asked Ögödei for this woman but was not successful.³⁷

According to Rashid Al-din, Empress Mogo was the daughter of the ruler of the Bekrin who gave her in marriage to Chinggis Khan. After his death, and in accordance with Mongol custom she became the wife of his son Ögödei, who "loved her more than his other wives so that they were jealous of her." She was evidently a woman of considerable attraction, and Chaghatai too, was enamored of her and having sought her hand too late, refused the offer of any other of his father's ladies as a substitute.

Chaghatai Khan had eight sons. He loved his second son Mö'tüken more than the other children. Since Chinggis Khan also loved him greatly, he was mostly in attendance on him. Unfortunately, when the Mongol troops assaulted Khwārazm Mö'tüken was killed by an arrow. Chinggis Khan was so greatly distressed at this, and, when he captured the castle he destroyed it utterly, put all the inhabitants to death and called it Ma'u-Qurghan.³⁸ Chaghatai designated Mö'tüken's fourth son, Qara-Hülegü, as the heir-apparent in place of his father. When Qara-Hülegü died, his wife Orqina Khatun, who was from the Oirat tribe, ruled the *ulus* of Chaghatai for ten years, and upon his death, Alghu, the son of Baidar, who was Qara-Hülegü's cousin, became ruler of the *ulus* of Chaghatai by command of Arigh Böke and married Orqina Khatun.³⁹ The new rulers had obviously tried to use the influence of Orqina to secure their rule in the *ulus* of Chaghatai.

³⁴ J. Holmgren: "Observations on Marriage..." (1986): 152-3.

³⁵ *The Successors*, 2: 100.

³⁶ *Op. cit.*, 2: 101-2.

³⁷ *World Conqueror*, vol. 1, p. 240.

³⁸ In Mongolian language, "Evil Fortress." *The Successors*, 3:137.

³⁹ *The Successors*, 3:142-3.

Thus, the common pattern of levirate marriage in the Mongol royal clan was that of a son inheriting his father's wife. But there are examples where a nephew took his aunt, or a grandson took his grandmother. Möngke Khan's Empress Yesur was taken by Arigh Böke's son Yobuqur under the order of Khubilai Khan.⁴⁰ According to Rashid Al-din, Yobuqur took Tolui's wife Nayan Khatun.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Op.cit., 7:311. Khubilai said: "Let the great yurt, in which Yesüder Khatun lived, be administered by Yobuqur, and let Yobuqur marry Yesüder."

⁴¹ Ibid., 7:312. "He (Yobuqur) had also one of Tolui's wives, called Nayan Khatun, of the Qinqirat people, and the yurt had been transmitted by [Sorqoqtani Beki] to Arigh Böke."

CHAPTER THREE

Chinggisid Marriage Strategies and the Political Implications of Mongol Royal Marriages

A Comparison of Marriage Strategies between the Mongol Royal Family and Typical Chinese Dynasties

In comparing the royal marriages of the Mongol Yuan with those of the other dynasties in Chinese history, we find that the Mongol Yuan imperial marriage patterns were unique.

First of all, the Mongol Yuan royal family is the only one in Chinese history that actively established and maintained marriage relationships with other nationalities. Two equally important factors may explain this phenomenon. The first factor is related to the exogamic marriage system adopted by Mongols, which required them to find marriage partners outside of their own tribe. The other factor, I believe, is political choice. The main purpose of these marriages was to enhance the political and military strength of the Mongol Empire.

In Chinese history, since the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.), one of the most important means of dealing with foreign affairs had been an institution called “*heqin*” in which the Chinese ruling house attempted to cement relations with rulers of nomadic peoples in border areas, by marrying to them, daughters of the imperial family. The aim of *heqin* was either to pacify a troublesome border nationality, or to make an alliance with a nationality through marriage.

The two parties in the *heqin* relationship generally had to make pledges and exchange gifts, and generally the weaker party had to send a Prince to the other party as a hostage. The *heqin* strategy was usually employed when a dynasty was weak and faced strong enemies. Rarely would an Emperor marry his daughter to a head of a small and weak nationality or tribe that did not constitute a menace to his dynasty. Nor would he marry a woman from

such a nationality or tribe as his Empress. Therefore, in a general sense, *heqin* represented a one-way marriage and a temporary expedient measure.¹

The *heqin* marriage in early China was the most typical of political marriages, and a woman in such a marriage was actually the victim of politics. She had no choice but to obey her destiny and to fulfill her historical mission. The most famous women in Chinese *heqin* history were Wang Zhaojun of the Han dynasty and Princess Wencheng of the Tang dynasty, with Wang Zhaojun as the exceptional example, since she took this historical mission on her own initiative. When Huhanye Chanyu, the chief of the Xiongnu a powerful people on the north border of the Han Empire, made an offer of marriage to Emperor Yuan of the Han dynasty in 33 BC, the Emperor was reluctant to offer his daughter or any other women of the imperial family to Huhanye. Instead, he planned to offer him five palace women. Wang Zhaojun, as a palace lady-in-waiting, was never visited by the Emperor, stood up at this crucial point and stated that she was willing to go to the northern steppes with the Chanyu. When summoned to court, her beauty and grace astonished the courtiers and the Emperor himself who immediately regretted his decision to let her marry the Chanyu.²

The Han records do not record the details of the treaties signed between Huhanye and Emperor Yuan. According to the studies conducted by Thomas J. Barfield, until the time of Wang Mang (r. AD 9-23), the *heqin* agreement between the Chanyu and the Han Emperor had four provisions.

1. Annual payments of silk, and wine were made to the Chanyu.
2. The Han court was to provide the Chanyu with a Princess in marriage.
3. The Han and Xiongnu state were to be ranked as equals with each ruler sovereign in his own realm.
4. Both parties were to accept the Great Wall as the boundary between the two states.³

It is said that the marriage between Wang Zhaojun and Huhanye in 33 AD provided sixty years of peace in China's northern frontier. The Han court continually provided the Chanyu with an annual subsidy, in addition to an Imperial Consort who, following Xiongnu custom, later remarried his successor. After the death of the Khan, Wang Zhaojun remarried his heir,

¹ Zhang Zhengming "Heqin yanjiu, *Minzu shi luncong*, Zhonghua Shuju, 4 (1986).

² Fan Ye, *Hou Han shu*, juan 89, p. 2941, Zhonghua shuju (1974)

³ Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China*, 221 BC to AD 1757, Blackwell Publishers, (1989). p. 66.

thus prolonging the peace. The Han court treated the Xiongnu as China's equal state with Chanyu as the legitimate ruler of all peoples north of the Great Wall. The long-term peace was broken by Wang Mang in his short-lived Xin dynasty (AD 9-23) when he attempted to change the status quo by revising the treaty and redefining Han-Xiongnu relations more in China's favor, which provoked the Xiongnu.⁴

There were six *heqin* marriages in its real meaning in the Mongol Yuan. They occurred between Chinggis Khan's family and the Western Xia, Jin, and Uighur Gaochang. Xiangzong (r. 1206-1211) of the Western Xia was compelled to present a Princess to Chinggis Khan when the Mongol troops were attacking his country. Xuanzong (r. 1213-1223) of Jin presented the Princess Supreme of the State of Qi to Chinggis Khan when his capital was besieged by the Mongol troops.⁵ Chinggis Khan married a Princess to Barshukh Art Tegin the Idu-qut (Idikut) of the Gaochang State. Khubilai Khan married a Princess to Har-dijin the Idu-qut of the Uighur Gaochang State, and he also successively married two Princesses to the Uighur Niulin-dijin⁶

After Niulin-dijin, the Uighur Gaochang state still maintained marriage relations with the Mongol Yuan royal family, but at that time the Idu-qut had become a regional officer of the Yuan dynasty. Therefore the later marriages should not be viewed as *heqin*.

If we compare the imperial marriages of the Yuan dynasty with that of the preceding Song, we would find that their marriage strategies and practices were very different. The Song imperial family learned from the troubles caused by "Consort clans" (*waiqi*), and took various measures to prevent *waiqi* interference in their political affairs. In the early Song dynasty, most of the *waiqi* consisted of families of celebrated generals from the Five Dynasties and the Song imperial family intended to consolidate its political power by means of marriages with those powerful generals. At the same time, it was also intended to weaken the power of those generals by means of marriage to secure its political rule. For example, when the great generals, such as Shi Shouxin agreed to establish marriage relationships with Song Taizu (Zhao Kuangyin), they were immediately persuaded to give up their military powers.

One of the best-known events in the Song history is called "Giving up military power with a cup of wine". In order to avoid the malpractice of *waiqi* in state affairs, a series of "Methods of managing *waiqi*" was gradually

⁴ Op. cit. p. 67.

⁵ YS 1:17. See the basic annals of Taizu.

⁶ YS 122:2999-3001. See the Biography of Barshukh Art Tegin.

developed.⁷ Its strategy towards *waiqi* was of “Providing them with handsome salary and high-rank titles but not letting them hold and monopolize power”.⁸

The Song imperial family also formulated a series of stipulations. For example, a *waiqi* member should not be a Chancellor, an Envoy of the Department of Military Affairs (*Shumishi*), Attendant (*Shicongguan*), a Circuit Supervisor (*Jiansi*), or a Commandery Governor (*Junshou*). Most importantly, he must be prohibited from commanding troops. Moreover, a man who held a military or political office must resign if a woman in his family became Empress.

One might also note that one of the distinctive principles of Song imperial marriage was “not considering family rank in marriage”. Zhang Bangwei has compared the backgrounds of Empresses and Consorts between the Tang dynasty and Song dynasty. According to his statistics, 70.8% of the Empresses and Consorts in the Tang dynasty were from high-ranking bureaucratic families, while only 26.8% of Empresses and Consorts were from such families in the Song dynasty.⁹ Among the forty-one Empresses and Consorts who had biographies in the official history (*Songshi*), twenty-one of them were from non-bureaucratic families, and many were from lower status families. For example, Empress Liu, wife of Zhenzong had been a street-performer in Kaifeng. The mother of Consort Miao of Renzong had been the wet nurse of Renzong himself. The father of Empress Zheng of Huizong was the owner of a wine shop.

On the contrary, almost all of the Empresses and Consorts in the Mongol Yuan were from aristocratic families. Among the 27 Empresses who have biographies in the *Yuanshi*, 26 of them were from aristocratic families, which make up 96% of the total statistic numbers. Only the Korean woman, Qishi Wanzhehudu, the Empress of Shundi, was from a common family.

Political Implications of the Mongolian Royal Marriages

Marriages in the imperial families of ancient China often had strong political implications from the beginning. *Liji-hunyi* (Records of Rites--Marriage Rituals) states that “Marriage rituals are to combine the best parts of two surnames (families or tribes), to serve the ancestral hall, and to continue later generations.”¹⁰ This is the oldest and most typical definition of marriage by

⁷ Li Yujie, Qin Xueqi, *Waiqi yu huangquan* Xinan Shifan Daxue Chuban She, 1993.

⁸ *Guochao Zhuchen zouyi juan* 35. Quoted in *waiqi yu huangquan*.

⁹ Zhang Bangwei, *Hunyi yu shehui* (*Songdai*) Ch. 4. Quoted in *Waiqi yu huangquan*.

¹⁰ *Liji*-“*hunyi*”, *juan* 44.

Chinese standards. It has two implications. First of all, a marriage, as a political relationship between two families or tribes, is a means to expand the sphere of political power and to raise the position of the families or tribes concerned. This is defined as “combining the best parts of the two surnames”. Secondly, external-tribe marriage was regarded as a means to increase population and to improve the quality of the population in order to continue the blood lineage of the tribes or families. This is what is meant by “to continue later generation”.

From the point of view of socio-politics, the marriages of a royal family and a Prince’s family were the most typical of political marriages. An imperial family always intended to establish or strengthen the political and military relationships with its marriage partners to increase their own interests. Therefore, they were extremely careful in choosing a marriage partner for their children. In short, the political interests of the royal family are of great and foremost importance in determining a marriage for their children. The feelings of the two partners in a marriage were almost always irrelevant.

The political aspects of the royal marriage of the Mongol Yuan were distinct.

The Introduction to the Table of Princesses in the *Yuanshi* tells us:

By a rule of the Yuan imperial court, nobody was allowed to marry a Yuan Princess if he was not a noble so conferred for meritorious service or a king in a conferred state. Therefore, the persons who maintained marriage relationships with the Yuan court were deemed as Princes, and they were carefully entrusted by the Yuan court to guard the frontiers.¹¹

In creating a steppe empire, Chinggis Khan was first and foremost anxious to recruit a group of trusted aides. His experience made him to believe that most of the Mongol clans were not reliable, since they had deserted him and his mother when his father died. They elected him khan one year, and deserted him the next year. Even his uncles and brothers had at times allied themselves with rivals.

As a result, four types of personals were more important to him. One was his so-called “companions” or *nökör*, who swore their personal allegiance as free men to him, such as Bo’orchu, one of his greatest generals. They acted as bodyguards, and personal units in war. A second type was “household retainers”, such as Jelme and Muqali. The third type was *anda*, sworn brotherhood, which created a similar bond but with a stress on equality.

¹¹ *YS* 109: 2759.

Chinggis used the *anda* relationship of his father with the Ong Khan to gain power in Mongolia, and the *anda* relationship between Chinggis and Jamukha was also constructive during his early military career. The fourth type was the imperial sons-in-law, *güregen*.

It seems, therefore, that although male/male bonding was most important, marriage were regarded as an important means to ally all possible forces. For example, Chinggis acknowledged Ong-Khan as his adoptive father when he was still weak, and initiated an exchange marriage relationship between the two families to keep a more intimate relationship with Ong-Khan. He proposed that his own son, Jochi, marry Cha'ur Beki, younger sister of Senggüm (Ong-Khan's son), and his eldest daughter Khojen Beki marry Senggüm's son Tusaqa."¹²

The Secret History records:

When Chinggis Khan, thinking, saying [unto himself], '[Over and] above [the fact that we are already] friendly, let us be doubly friendly,' requested for Jochi Cha'ur Beki, the younger sister of Senggüm, as he requested [her], saying, 'I shall give in exchange unto Tusaqa, son of Senggüm, our Khojen Beki.'¹³

In this plan, Chinggis Khan was not successful, probably because of the refusal of Senggüm. Later when Senggüm attempted to destroy Chinggis, he invited Chinggis to his camp to dine upon the "betrothal meal",¹⁴ intending to entrap him at the banquet. Chinggis, however, saw through this fraud and did not attend the banquet. When Senggüm found that his conspiracy was discovered, he launched a campaign to attack Chinggis.¹⁵

In spite of past failures, Chinggis Khan and his successors were determined to use marriage strategies to maintain and enhance their power, and thus made the Mongolian royal marriages in the twelfth and thirteenth-centuries the most typical political marriages. The Mongolian royal house tried various ways to establish or strengthen the military relationship with every marriage partner. Marriages with the allied states were taken as a tool to effectively control them. All the Princesses were undertaking important political missions when they were sent to marry the heads of dependencies.

¹² *YCMS*, annotated by Chen Binhe, Shangwu Yinshu Guan, P. 87,

¹³ *The Secret History*, Ch. V. pp. 89-90.

¹⁴ M. "Buwulezhar", Chinese translation is "*xu hun yan*". "Buwulezhar" referred to animal neck in Mongolian. The special food at the "betrothal meal" was necks of sheep, implying that the two parties in the marriage could not go back on their words once they ate the meal. See Daruitibu, *Xinyi jianzhu Menggu mishi*, Neimengu Renmin Chubanshe, (1979): 139, fn. 1.

¹⁵ *YCMS*, pp. 88-93.

The *Altan Tobci* records three stories which will help us understand the political implication of Mongolian royal marriages and Chinggis Khan's marriage strategies. From this we can see clearly how Chinggis Khan used his daughters as pawns on the vast chessboard of his empire.

When a Princess was to marry a foreign king or a tribal chieftain, she would be first instructed formally about her mission by Chinggis Khan himself or by one of his representatives. She was seen not merely as a wife of the leader of the allied state, but her mission was to become the political representative of the Mongol Empire to help control the allied state or tribe. She fully understood that she must remain loyal to the Mongol royal family instead of to the family she was going to enter; she must keep a clear head and not be influenced by new circumstances.

Chinggis Khan had three daughters. His third daughter, Alahai-Beki by his first wife, Börte, was married to Alawusi Tijihuli, chief of the Öngüt tribe. Before her marriage, Chinggis Khan issued an imperial edict to her:

You should be determined to become one of my feet. When I am going on an expedition, you should be my helper; when I am galloping, you should be my steed! You have to remember: life is short, but fame is everlasting! No friend is better than your own wise heart! No ferocious enemy is worse than a resentful and wicked heart! Although there are many things you can rely on, no one is more reliable than yourself; although many people can be your henchmen, no one is more intimate than your own consciousness; although there are many things you should cherish, no one is more valuable than your own life! If you preserve your purity, you will be able to foster good habits and characteristics! If you are eager to learn, you will always be successful. You should be prudent, steadfast and courageous. You must follow all of these carefully! ¹⁶

The career of Alahai proved that she strictly followed her father's instructions. When Chinggis Khan and most of the Mongol troops left to conquer the west regions, she was entrusted as "Princess Regent" (*Jian guo gongzhu*) to govern not only the Öngüt tribe, but also all territories of Northern China. Muqali, the King of Northern China, also received orders from the Princess. ¹⁷

Sechin Jagchid (Zhaqi-siqin), trans. *Menggu huangjin shi yi zhu* Lian Jing Chuban Shiye Gongsì, (1979): 40-42. Luosangdanjin, *Menggu huangjin shi*, trans. by Sedaorji, Mengguxue Chubanshe, (1993):181-2.

¹⁷ In 1958, the Princess' bronze seal, weighted 1.4 kilograms, was discovered in Wuchuan county, Inner Mongolia, there are fourteet Chinese characters 'Seal of envoy of Princess Regent in Hebei' and two Uighur characters. See Ding Xueyun, "Jianguo GongzhuTongyin Kaoshi" (Preliminary research on Princess Regent Bronze seal), *Zhongguo Menggushi Xuehui Chengli Dahui Jinian Jika*, (1979)

In investigating the occurrence of levirate within the leadership of allied and subordinate tribes during the World Empire, Holmgren claims that it was the result of singular political circumstances.¹⁸ The career of Alahai illustrates this point. It shows how both the levirate and the principle of widow-chastity were manipulated by Chinggisid leaders in their quest for greater domination over their allied peoples, but it also suggests that where Chinggisid control was secure and direct succession could be instituted, widow-chastity was the preferred *modus operandi*. According to Holmgren, Alahai was married three times--first to the older son of the Öngüt leader, Alaques, then to Alaques' nephew, Zhenguo, and finally to Alaques' younger son, Boyaohe. At one time, she governed the Öngüt as regent, first in the absence of Zhenguo and then, after Zhenguo's death, as widow in the name of her younger son, Niegutai. According to Holmgren's analyses, her first marriage had secured the alliance between her father and the Öngüt. Then her husband and father-in-law were murdered by their own tribesmen. Chinggis Khan, faced with the problem of installing a successor who would be both loyal to him and able to control the tribesmen, passed over the young Boyaohe and installed his older cousin Zhenguo as leader. To legitimize the succession, and to further Chinggisid control over the Öngüt leadership, Zhenguo was married to Alahai, since Zhenguo's assassination had the potential of creating a succession problem in the next generation. Thus, upon Zhenguo's death, Alahai first governed the Öngüt as regent and then married Boyaohe after his return from a military campaign. In this way, her young son by Zhenguo was forced to wait until the death of his step-father/cousin before he could assume leadership, so that Boyaohe's sons, being children of a lesser wife, were unable to threaten his position.

The *Altan Tobci* records the marriage of Chinggis Khan's daughter named Ilkhaltun (Ilghaltun) to the Idug-qut (chief) of Uighur, Barchukh Art Tegin.¹⁹ *The Secret History* also records this event in a similar way, but the name of the girl was recorded as Al-Altun.²⁰ In the *Yuanshi* the girl's name is Yeli An-dun and it is closer to the sound of Ilkhaltun.²¹

According to the Persian sources, the marriage between the Uighur chief and his intended spouse, variously called Al Altan or Ilkhaltun Begi, never occurred, owing to the demise of the principals.²² Hong Jun in *Yuanshi yiwén*

¹⁸ J. Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage ... (1986): 162-63.

¹⁹ Sechin Jagchid (Zhaqi-siqin), *Menggu huangjinshi yizhu* (1979):42-43.

²⁰ Op. cit., p. 355.

²¹ YS, 2760.

²² See Rashid/Ali-zade, p. 341; Juvaini/Boyle, vol. I, p. 47, n. 17; YS. 109, p. 2760; and Dawson, op. cit., p. 141. Quoted from Thomas T. Allsen: "The Yuan and the Uigurs of

zhengbu also states that the Princess died before her wedding, and Barchukh Art Tegin actually did not marry the Princess.²³ However, according to the *Altan Tobci*, it seems that this marriage did occur.

The record in the *Altan Tobci* indicates the political significance of this marriage. It reads:

When the Uighur Idug-qut came to marry Ilkhaltun Begi, Chinggis Khan issued an imperial edict to her, "A blessed woman has three husbands. Which three husbands are they? Firstly, her nation is her husband; secondly, her reputation is her husband; finally, the man who married her is her husband. These are your three husbands. If you can take your nation as your husband, and serve him very carefully, you will certainly earn your (second) husband---- reputation. If you can take your reputation as your husband and carefully protect him, how will the husband who has married you ever forsake you?"²⁴

Another daughter of Chinggis Khan was Checheyigen, and her name is not recorded in the "Table of Princesses" in the *Yuanshi*. However, both the *Altan Tobci* and *The Secret History* record that she was married to Inalchi the son of Khutuqa-Begi of the Oirat tribe. In the year 1207, Chinggis Khan ordered his son Jochi to conquer the "People of the Forest" (*linzhong baixing*), the Oirat tribe first submitted to Chinggis Khan and influenced other tribes to submit. Therefore Chinggis Khan married his daughter to Inalchi, and married Jochi's daughter Holuiqan to Inalchi's elder brother Törölchi. The *Altan Tobci* reads: "Chinggis Khan married Checheyigen Aghai²⁵ to Inalchi of the Oirat tribe. When the wedding was going on, he ordered the nobleman (*noyan*) Boworchu to give instructions (to Checheyigen). Boworchu said:

Listen, Checheyigen Aghai! Because you are the daughter of your Khan father, you are sent to govern the people of the Oirat tribe. You are going to pitch a tent there. You should get up early and go to sleep late! Do not make yourself a stranger in your mother-in-law's family! Day and night, you should be circumspect all the time. Your words must show your wisdom, you must keep yourself chaste. Leave the

Turfan in the 13th Century". In *China among Equals, the Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors*, ed., Morris Rossabi, University of California Press, (1983): 248.

²³ *YSYZB*, juan. 3, P. 132.

²⁴ *Menggu huangjinshi*, trans. by Sedaorji, Mengguxue Chubanshe, (1993):184-5.

²⁵ According to Zhaqi Siqin, "Aghai" was an honorific title of the girls of noble family in Mongol society. It also means "baby" in the Mongolian language. See Zhaqi Siqin: *Menggu huangjinshi yi zhu* (1979): 43.

things that you have not mastered home, and bring all the things you have mastered with you. You should organize the Oirat people and control them!²⁶

On the other hand, Chinggis Khan and his successors never married their daughters to their trusted generals, such as the King Muqali “He had a very close relationship with the imperial family, but they never intermarried for generations.” (*Qin lian tianjia, shi bu hunyin*)²⁷. Although Muqali had the title of King, he was still deemed a “slave of the threshold” of Chinggis Khan’s family. The marriage strategy of Chinggis Khan was to use marriage to control the tribal chiefs and kings whose submission was considered unreliable. While it was unnecessary to apply this strategy to his own trusted aides who were firm in their loyalty to Chinggis Khan and his successors.

From the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries, when Chinggis Khan was annexing other tribes in the steppes, the marriage relatives of Chinggis Khan had proven to be militarily important. When the Onggirat tribe and four other tribes formed an alliance and swore an oath at the Aleiquan to attack Chinggis Khan. Chinggis Khan’s father-in-law Dei Sechen sent an envoy to report the situation to Chinggis. This enabled him to be prepared for the allied attack. Later, when Jamuka planned to attack Chinggis Khan with allied troops arranged in thirteen “wings” or battalions, Chinggis’ brother-in-law Botu who was the chief of Ikires tribe, also sent an envoy to alert Chinggis to the impending danger.

It is therefore clear that Chinggis realized early the critical importance of marriage alliances in both the establishment and maintenance of rulership. His successors were to learn to follow his example.

²⁶ Zhaqi Siqin, *Menggu huangjinshi y zhu* (1979): 44.

²⁷ Yun Mingshan, *Chengxiang Dongping Zhongxianwang bei*, in *Yuanwenlei*, juan 24. Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, (1993): 284.

CHAPTER FOUR

Mongolian Marriage Custom and Sinicization

The Sinicization of the Mongols in the Yuan dynasty is a controversial topic. Many scholars have argued that the nomads and semi-nomads that conquered China could never have escaped Sinicization, but among them the Mongols were the least Sinicized. The eminent Qing historian, Zhao Yi (1727-1814), found that “most of the Yuan Emperors did not study the Chinese language.”¹ A Japanese scholar Haneda Tōru claimed that in the Yuan dynasty, the Chinese people and Chinese culture were both despised because the Mongols pursued a policy of “Mongolism.”²

Karl A. Wittfogel and Chia-sheng Feng suggested that the conquerors and the conquered could not fully accept each other, and therefore one party could not be completely assimilated by the other. The cultural relations of the two parties had always been a two-way acculturation instead of a one-way assimilation, so that assimilation in its real sense could occur only when the conquering dynasty had collapsed and the status of the nationalities had become equal. In their view, the cultural and historical backgrounds of the conquering nationalities determined their attitudes towards Chinese culture, and that in that other conquest dynasties like the Jin and the Qing, established by the semi-agricultural and semi-nomad nationalities, were inclined to assimilate Chinese culture and consequently became deeply Sinicized. To them, the Yuan and the Liao dynasties, established by nomads, stubbornly resisted Chinese culture, and were consequently less Sinicized.³

These views have exerted a great influence on Yuan studies. However, they are somewhat biased. Some scholars have pointed out the fact that, although the Mongol rulers carried out Mongolism for the purpose of ruling

¹ Zhao Yi, (collated and annotated by Wang Shumin), *Ershiershi zhaji jiaozheng*, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, juan 30, (1984): 686-87.

² Haneda Tōru, “Genchō no Kan bunwei ni taisuru taido” *Haneda Kakushi shigaku ronbunshū* Kyōto: Tōyōshi Kenkyūkai (1957): 670-96.

³ Karl A. Wittfogel and Chia-sheng Feng, *History of Chinese Society—Liao (907-1125)*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, (1949): 1-32.

the Chinese nation, most of them had learned Chinese culture.⁴ The founder of the Yuan, Khubilai Khan (r.1260-1294), showed great interest in Chinese culture in his early life, and appointed many Chinese officials in important governmental positions. But for some reason, especially after the rebellion of Li Tan, a Chinese general whom Khubilai had once trusted, his attitude towards the Chinese and Chinese culture changed dramatically. Khubilai never really understood the Chinese language, and used interpreters when receiving Chinese scholars. At the same time, it is certain that he provided for the literary education of the imperial princes. The heir-apparent Jin Gim (Yuzong) received lessons in Chinese writing and had to practice everyday.⁵ The other three Emperors in the middle period of the Yuan--Temür Öljeitü (Chengzong, r.1295-1307), Qaishan (Wuzong, r. 1308-1311), Yisün Temür (Emperor Taiding, r. 1324-1328) had long been living in the northern steppes as military generals and therefore were not familiar with the Chinese language and culture.⁶ After the middle Yuan, Ayurbarvada (Renzong, r. 1312-1320), Shidebala (Yingzong, r. 1321-1323), Tuq Temür (Wenzong, r. 1329-1332), and Toqon Temür (Shundi, r. 1333-1368) were all attained a grate familiarity with Chinese literature and arts. Renzong was particularly interested in Chinese erudition, and under his reign the literary examinations were reintroduced (1313), and he is reported as having personally inspected the list of candidates for the *jinshi* degree in 1318, and he could also compose court documents without help from Chinese scholars. By far the most erudite Emperor of the Yuan dynasty was Wenzong, who was

⁴ See for example, John Langlois, Jr., "Yu Chi and His Mongol Sovereign: The Scholar as Apologist", *Journal of Asian studies* 38: 1 (1978), 99-116; Herbert Franke, "Could the Mongol Emperors Read and Write Chinese?" *Asia Major* (New Series), 3 (1952), 28-41. Luo Xianyou, "Yuanchao Zhu Di Hanhua Shu Yi", *Minzu Yanjiu*, (1987): 5, 67-74; Li Zefen: "Yuandai Zhu Di de Hanxue Xiuyang", in *Song Liao Jin Yuan Lishi Lunwenji*, Taibei: Liming Wenhua, (1991): 743-748; Xiao Qiqing, "Lun Yuandai Mengguren zhi huahua", in *Meng Yuan shi xinyan*, Taibei: Yunchen Wenhua, (1994): 219-249.

⁵ For a detailed account of the literary education of Jin Gim in Chinese language and culture, see Herbert Franke, "Could the Mongol Emperors Read and Write Chinese?" in *China under Mongol Rule*, Variorum, ch. V, (1994): 29-31.

⁶ There is a counter-evidence indicating that Khaishan was able to understand Chinese. In the *Yuanshi yeting ji* we find a story telling us that one evening of a Middle-Autumn Festival, Wuzong enjoyed the full moon with his concubines on a boat in the *Taiye* Pool. On both sides of the boat there were "woman armies" wearing different uniforms. Accompanied by beautiful dance and music, the Emperor started the banquet. One of his concubines, Luo, danced and sang for his pleasure. The words of the song were in classical Chinese, and it likened the Emperor to the moon. The Emperor was delighted. See *Yuanshi yeting ji*, in *Yuandai biji xiaoshuo*, (ed.) Zhou Guangpei, Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe. (1998): 59-60.

especially talented at Chinese poems, calligraphy and painting. Herbert Franke even believes that although there were no poets and artists of great merit among the Yuan Emperors, if the Yuan did not perish so suddenly, it is highly possible that it would have produced Emperors such as Kangxi and Qianlong in the Qing dynasty who fully mastered Chinese language and culture.⁷

The etiquette and customs of the Mongols before the conquest of China were deeply influenced by the lifestyle and environment of nomadic society. Chinese etiquette and custom were shaped by Confucian ethics and moral standards developed in an agricultural society. In the year 1260, when Khubilai ascended the throne in Kaiping, his imperial edict acknowledged that since Chinggis Khan conquered the world, more than fifty years before, “although military objectives have been achieved, cultural achievements have been very few.”⁸ Thus, he was determined to carry out a “constitutional” reform. First, he announced that his Yuan dynasty was the successor to all past Chinese dynasties, and he adopted Chinese titles for his reign.

With regard to etiquette and custom, Khubilai also followed Chinese traditions. In the third year of the Zhiyuan era (1266), he built an ancestral temple to offer sacrifice to his ancestors. In the eighth year of the Zhiyuan era (1271) he ordered his ministers Liu Bingzhong and Xu Heng to start drawing up a new court ritual, so that from that time onward, court activities had to follow the court rites, such as in times when an Emperor ascended the throne, an Emperor changed the title of his reign, the Yuan court celebrated an Emperor’s birthday, princes and foreign envoys were presented at the court, and an Emperor granted titles to his children, wives, mother, and grandmother. But when the Emperor entertained his relatives or ministers, he still followed original Mongolian rites and customs.⁹

It must be noted that Khubilai’s promotion of Chinese administration systems met strong opposition by more conservative Mongol noblemen. On one occasion, the princes in the northwest sent envoys to question Khubilai, “Our old customs are different from those of the Chinese. Now you stay in the territory of the Chinese people, and build capital and cities, and use the Chinese system of etiquettes and rites. Why do you do these things?”¹⁰ To

⁷ Herbert Franke, op. cit., “Could the Mongol Emperors Read and Write Chinese?” *Asia Major* (New Series), 3 (1952), 28-41. Collected in *China under Mongol Rule*, Variorum, ch. V, (1994):41.

⁸ YS 4:64.

⁹ YS, “*Li yue zhi*”, 1664.

¹⁰ YS. Biography of Gao Zhiyao, 3073.

assuage their anger, Khubilai had to send envoys to them to explain his governance policies, while at the same time scaling-down the extent of the Sinicization reform experiment.

There was a distinctive difference between the marriage customs of the Han Chinese and Mongolians. Like the Chinese, the Mongols paid great attention to the chastity of married women, but the Mongols encouraged widows to remarry, especially in the levirate fashion. This was in sharp contrast to Chinese marriage customs and moral standard, which exhibited a horror of incest.

When Chinggis knew, from a cryptic remark of his mother Hö'elun, that and wanted to remarry, he gave her in marriage to Menglik Echige of the Qongqotad.¹¹ This is confirmed by the *Secret History* which records that in 1206, Chinggis Khan appointed "father Münglig" as Battalion Commander (*qianhu zhang*).¹²

Levirate marriage might also have functioned as an indicator to measure the extent of the Sinicization of the Mongols. Throughout the Yuan dynasty, the Yuan court never prohibited this marriage custom among the Mongols, and in the early Yuan, it even tried to extend this custom to other nationalities. Later it stipulated that each nationality should follow its own marriage customs, and therefore the Han people, and the Southerners (*Nan ren*) could not practice levirate. "Among the Han people and the Southerners, when a father dies, his son might take his stepmother; when an elder brother dies, his younger brother might take his sister-in-law. This should be banned."¹³

In the late Yuan, many officials urged the Emperor Shundi to reform Mongol marriage customs and to ban levirate among the Mongols. Wugusun-liangzhen a highly Sinicized Jurchen, pointed out:

¹¹ *The Successors*, 4: 169. This remarriage initially had strong political implications. One of the sons of Menglik, Kököchü, was a powerful shaman who helped Chinggis Khan greatly in his early political career. By establishing this marriage Chinggis Khan intended to use the influence of the Shaman to help him in his plan rule Mongolia. However, matters went beyond Chinggis' control when Menglik's family became so powerful that it directly threatened his rule. When Chinggis founded the Great Mongol *Ulus*, his mother, together with his youngest brother Odchigin were granted ten thousand troops, which was the largest share. Along with the remarriage of Hö'elun with Menglik, a huge part of Chinggis' troops went to Menglik Echige's family. When Odchigin went to Menglik's home to get his people back, he was insulted by the shaman and his brothers. Therefore Chinggis Khan killed the shaman and destroyed the arrogance of this family. See *The Secret History*, Ch. X, pp. 175-82. YCMS, (1980): 273-9.

¹² *The Secret History*, ch. VIII, p. 141.

¹³ YS 103: 2644. See "*Xingfa zhi*".

The three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues derive from the heaven and cannot be changed. The officials discussing the laws say that “the national people (*guoren*, Mongols) are not restricted by this, and the *Semu* people¹⁴ should follow their own customs.” This implies that the Han people and the southern people should, while Mongols and the *Semu* people should not, abide by the three guides and five constant virtues. It seems to treat them preferentially, but it actually isolates them. Outwardly, it seems to respect them, but it actually insults them. Some infer from this that they are not treating Mongols as well as the Han and the southern people. Please summon the officials in the Protocol Department and the *zhishi* in the court and have a meeting, and stipulate that from the Emperor to the common people all must follow the ethical code, and thereby make laws that the former holy Emperors did not have time to make, and manifest the principles that will never change for ten thousand years.¹⁵

In 1356 (the 15th year of Zhizheng in Shundi’s reign) the Confucian official and scholars in the first *ordo*, Zheng Heng, also complained:

The Mongol people are the first nation of our country. It will be proper to teach them the ethical code. However, they still follow their own customs, they do not have a three-year mourning period, and they inherit step-mothers, aunts, and sisters-in-law. I am afraid that this will incur the ridicule of later generations.¹⁶

The Yuan Emperor Shundi’s response to these suggestions was “no reply” (*bu bao*). Obviously, and even at the end of the dynasty, the Mongol rulers were not inclined to exercise the Confucian code to reform the time-honored Mongol customs, in spite of their failure to disseminate levirate marriage among the Chinese during the early period of the Yuan dynasty. There were many stipulations in the Yuan Law Code (*Yuan Dianzhang*)¹⁷ concerning the marriages of the *Semu* people, Han people and the Southerners, but the rules for Mongols were exceptional: “For the *semu* peoples, they should follow their own customs if one marries a person within their own nationality. If a marriage is between two nationalities, they should follow the custom of the male party. But the Mongols are not restricted by this.”¹⁸ From this we can infer that marriages between Mongols and other nationalities were allowed, but only Mongol marriage customs could be followed in a marriage between Mongols and another nationality. Throughout the Yuan dynasty, the Mongols still practised this custom as

¹⁴ *Semu* : Colored Eye People, including Muslims, Uighurs, etc.

¹⁵ YS 187: 4288. See the biography of Wugusun Liangzhen.

¹⁶ YS 44: 921. See the basic annals of Shundi.

¹⁷ *Yuan Dianzhang* is a collection of Yuan laws and regulations before 1322 (the second year of Zhizhi in Yingzong’s reign).

¹⁸ *Yuan dianzhang*, vol. 18, “*Hunying*”, Zhongguo shudian, (1990): 280.

usual, and the Mongol rulers obviously permitted these practices. During Shundi's reign, when the chief of the Secretariat Council Kuokuodai (Kokodei) died, his concubine, a Korean woman, "swore not to remarry." However, the son born by his first wife wanted to take her, and thus he bribed the Right Chancellor Boyan and received permission from the Emperor to marry her.¹⁹

But among the Mongol rulers in China proper, levirate marriages seemed to have gradually disappeared. For example, Ögödei Khan had inherited a concubine of Chinggis Khan, Mogo Khatun, and Möngke Khan inherited a wife from his father Tolui. But since Khubilai Khan, no such cases have been found among the Yuan Emperors, although it occurred frequently among the Mongol princes and princesses in other Mongol khanates. This was perhaps a concession to Chinese sensibilities.

Among the scholars who have explored the extent of the Sinicization amongst the Mongols, John Dardess has argued that, especially in the late Yuan period, the conquerors had become Confucian adherents themselves. Luo Xianyou is in partial agreement, pointing out that, as a result of many factors, such as garrisoning, enfeoffment, the assumption of office outside the capital, as well as the wandering of destitute Mongols far from home, a large number of Mongols went south, so that there was a wide distribution of the Mongol population across the country. By the late Yuan and early Ming dynasties most of the Mongols who moved southward had become almost indistinct from the Chinese.²⁰

In contrast, scholars often argue that the Mongols in the Yuan dynasty never lost their cultural identity. Some, like E. Endicott-West, believe that the Mongols were not interested in the sophistication of Chinese culture, and that therefore Chinese culture did not strongly influence them.²¹

Herbert Franke also took this position that the Sinicization of the Mongols rulers was never fully achieved even after a long period of potential acculturation and gradual Sinicization, and a number of turning points.²² He

¹⁹ Tao Zongyi, *Chuo geng lu*, vol.15, (1963): 226.

²⁰ Luo Xianyou, "Yuandai Mengguren nanqian huodong shu lue", in *Minzu yanjiu*, 4 (1989).

²¹ Elizabeth Endicott-West, "Aspects of Khitan Liao and Mongolian Yuan Imperial Rule: A Comparative Perspective." Gary Seaman and Daniel Marks (eds.), *Rulers from the Steppe. State Formation on the Eurasian Periphery*, Los Angeles: Ethnographics Press, (1991): 199-222; *Mongolian rule in China : local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty*. Cambridge, Mass. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University: Harvard-Yenching Institute, (1989): 122-23.

²² Herbert Franke, "From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God", in *China under Mongol Rule*, Variorum, ch. IV, (1994): 8.

distinguished several stages in the transition from steppe rulership to (never fully realized) Chinese Emperors and back to the steppes. These were:

1. The old-Mongol period up to Chinggis Khan's accession in 1206;
2. The conquest of Peking and parts of Northern China, marked by the years 1215 (conquest of Peking) and 1234 (extinction of the Jin state).
3. The rule of Khubilai Khan (1260-1294, where several sub-stages could be determined);
4. The late reigns of the Mongol Emperors (1294-1368);
5. The influence on the Mongols of their rule over China after their expulsion in 1368.

Franke believed that the gradually and never fully achieved Sinicization of the Mongol rulers was the chief element underlying the methods and symbols of their legislation in the eyes of their Chinese subjects, but it seems clear at the same time, that decisive steps to transform the Mongol ruler into a Chinese Emperor were attempted under Khubilai Khan. Although Khubilai accepted the suggestions of his Chinese advisors and ordered his Chinese ministers to formulate court rules, it is doubtful that these rules were ever strictly followed. In fact, the rituals to be performed by the Emperor of his officials show, under the Yuan, a syncretism, because in addition to the rituals inherited from the Song and Jin, Mongol tribal rites continued to be performed.²³ Moreover, according to the "Records of Imperial Carriages and Garments" (*Yu fu zhi*) in the *Yuanshi*, the ceremonial dress of an Emperor was always decorated with clouds, dragons, mountains, and rivers.

²³ YS 72:1779, "The Five Rituals of the Yuan dynasty were all performed according to the Mongolian customs (*guosu*)". The "Five Rituals" in ancient China included worship rites (*ji li*), mourning rites (*xiong li*), military rituals (*jun li*), guest receiving rites (*bin li*), and ceremonial rites (*jia li*).

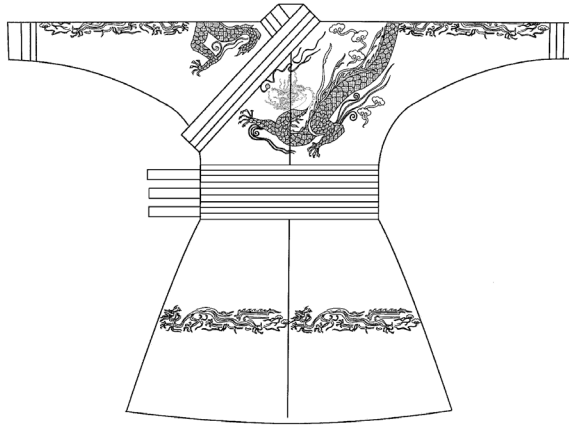


1. Khubilai on a Hunt. Painted by Liu Guandao in 1280, National Museum. Taipei.

This painting was painted by the Yuan palace artist Liu Guandao reveals the double roles of Khubilai as a Chinese Son of Heaven as well as the Khan of the Mongols and the ruler of the non-Chinese domains under Mongol control. The hunting ceremonial dress of Khubilai in this painting is a traditional Mongol style white marten coat, however, under the marten coat is a red dragon robe decorated with dragons. His Empress Chabui wore a Mongolian “*Haiqing*” style narrow-sleeve robe decorated with a dragon in the font.

Zhao Feng, a Chinese scholar who has thoroughly researched the different styles of dragon robes in the Yuan dynasty, suggests that the Yuan dynasty was a crucial period in the development of Chinese dragon robes, and the dragon robe that Khubilai wore in Liu Guandao’s painting is illustrated as the following,²⁴

²⁴ Zhao Feng, “Meng Yuan long pao de lei xing ji di wei”, *Wenwu*, 8 (2006): 85-96.



2. Dragon Robe from the Yuan Dynasty.

Khubilai wished to be accepted as a legitimate Chinese Son of Heaven in order to rule China, thus he must identify himself with China. Recognizing and accepting Chinese symbols would surely enhance his acceptance among the Chinese.

Yet Khubilai still sought recognition as a legitimate Great Khan of all the Mongol domains. Thus he could not confine himself to the Chinese culture, and, in fact, he made great efforts to maintain his nomadic cultural identity.

Thus, Khubilai, as well as some early Yuan Emperors, had to sit on the fence when dealing with Chinese culture and Mongolian identity. The eight extant official paintings of Yuan Emperors show that all of them wore traditional Mongolian style dress instead of Chinese style dragon robe.



3. Khubilai Khan (Shizu, 1215-1294)



4. Tuq Temür (Wenzong, 1304-1332)

Therefore, in contrast to the Manchu conquerors of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912), the Mongols worked hard to maintain their nomadic cultural identity and to resist Sinicization throughout the Yuan dynasty.

In addition to ceremonial dress, another indicative sign of this was the two-capital system and the migratory inspection tours of the Mongol Emperors. Khubilai Khan built two capitals, with the Grand Capital (Dadu, somewhere near present Beijing) being the official capital and the Supreme Capital (Shangdu in Mongolia) the secondary capital.

This type of capital system was not invented by the Mongols. Many Chinese dynasties had practiced this since the Western Zhou dynasty (1066 B.C.-771 B.C.). However, the secondary capitals in Chinese dynasties normally functioned only as a political symbol of the authority of the central governments. Rarely would the early Emperors go to these capitals to handle their official business, the Yuan dynasty was very unusual in this regard, since the secondary capital had the same political position as the official capital, and the Yuan Emperors spent approximately equal time in both capitals. Generally the Emperors left Dadu for Shangdu in the second or the third month of the year, and by the eighth or ninth month they would return to Dadu. Most of the Yuan court moved to Shangdu with the Emperor, including the Empresses and Imperial Concubines, the Crown Prince, other Mongol Princes, and court officials.²⁵ This was in theory, the time to review Mongol customs and to be re-acquainted with Mongol culture, as for instance, in the so-called “*Zhama* banquet.”²⁶ During the banquet, Chinggis Khan’s *jasagh* would be recited, and there were traditional Mongol sports and music.

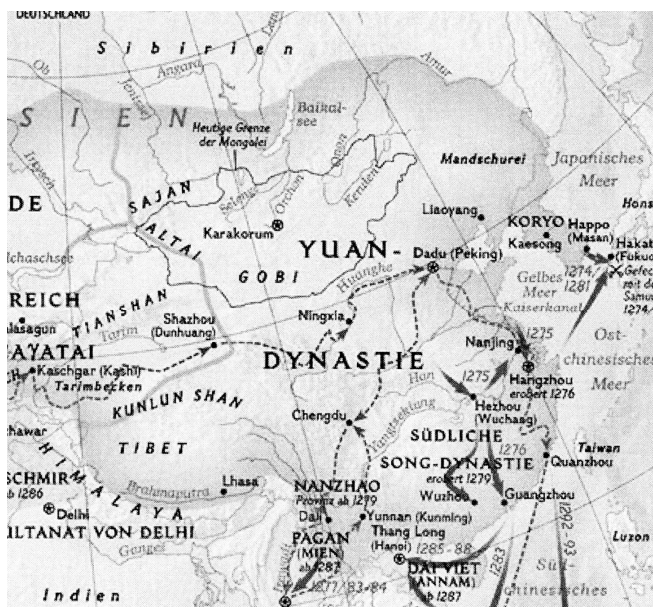
During their stay in Shangdu, the Mongol Emperors had to spend time hunting, which again was a time to re-new the Mongolian cultural tradition. Even in Dadu, the Mongol symbolic presence was evident in the architecture and decoration of some of the buildings within the Yuan palace complex. For example, we are told, in Khubilai’s sleeping chambers, curtains were dropped and screens of ermine skins were set up as tangible reminders of the Mongols’ hunting and pastoral life. The main reception hall contained a dais on which were models of reclining tigers, which were “by some mechanical device capable of motion as if they [were] alive.”²⁷ “Mongol-style tents

²⁵ Ye Xinmin, *Yuan shangdu yanjiu*, Nei Menggu daxue chubanshe, (1998), 17.

²⁶ “*Zhama*” is a Persian word, meaning clothing. When the Emperors hold a *zhama* banquet, all the princes, the imperial sons-in-law, ministers, and the Emperor’s bodyguards were invited to attend, and they had to wear clothes of the same color. Therefore it also was called “*zhisun* banquet”. “*Zhisun*” means color in Mongolian. It was normally deep red color. See CGL:376.

²⁷ Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, p. 133.

were erected in the Imperial Parks, and Khubilai's sons and their cousins often lived in them rather than in the palaces. When one of Khubilai's wives was in the last stages of pregnancy, she moved to these same tents to give birth.²⁸ Moreover, Khubilai assigned underlings to gather grass and earth from the Mongol steppes for his royal altar, another reminder of their pastoral heritage.²⁹



5. The Yuan Capitals: Dadu and Shangdu (Karakorum)³⁰

Throughout the Yuan dynasty, the Mongol rulers carried out a policy of ethnic segregation. By the end of the Yuan dynasty, both the Han people from the North and Southerners were prohibited from studying Mongolian writing and those of the *Semu* peoples.³¹

Nonetheless, despite the great efforts the Mongol rulers made to resist Sinicization and to maintain their cultural identity, they could not stop the trend of Sinicization among their own people. Levirate marriage is a good

²⁸ Paul Ratchnevsky, "Über den mongolischen Kult am Hofe der Grosskhane in China," in *Mongolian Studies*, ed. Ligeti, 435-41. Quoted in Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Kha*, p. 133. YS 77:1925.

²⁹ Emil Bretschneider, "Recherches archeologiques et historiques sur Peking et ses environs," 57. Quoted in Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, (1988):133.

³⁰ "Yuan dynasty." Online Map/Still. Britannica Student Encyclopædia. 18 Dec. 2007 <<http://student.britannica.com/eb/art-54551>>.

³¹ YS 39:893. Basic annals of Shundi.

example of this process, and it is clear that many Mongol women at the upper status levels had been influenced by the Confucian concept of chastity. Sengge Ragi (1282-?1332), the mother-in-law of Wenzong, the Grand Princess of the State of Lu, “became a widow when she was very young. She remained chaste and faithful to her husband, and did not allow her brothers-in-law to marry her, but spent her time fostering and educating her children.”³² She was highly praised and given honorable titles by Wenzong. She not only became comfortable in Chinese culture, but became a great art collector, preserving many ancient Chinese paintings, and thus helped to protect Chinese high culture.

The *Lienü zhuan* (Biographies of Exemplary Women) in the *Yuanshi* records another example. A woman named Tuotuoni from the Onggirat tribe was widowed when she was young. Her stepsons born by her husband’s previous wife wanted to take her according to the Mongol custom. But Tuotuoni accused them of “brutish behavior,” and threatened to commit suicide if they used force to take her.³³ Even as a Mongol woman, she regarded levirate as “brutish behavior,” certainly indicating that she had been influenced by Chinese moral standards.

In sum, the Mongol elite in the Yuan dynasty never completely gave up their national and cultural identities, and while they made great efforts to maintain them, they were not always successful. Though they attempted, for instance, to preserve the Mongol marriage customs, one hundred years of exposure to Chinese culture eventually altered them.

The concrete Sinicization of the Mongols occurred after the end of the Yuan dynasty. When Shundi fled to the North steppes, most of the Mongols and *Semu* people were not able to retreat from China. Only sixty thousand of the four hundred thousand Mongol troops successfully withdrew from China.³⁴ Those who remained in China hastily changed their names and hid their national identity. For example, the descendants of the Mongol general Muqali in Luoyang gave themselves a Chinese surname Li.³⁵

Thus, by the early Ming dynasty the Mongols who did not retreat to the north were swiftly Sinicized. In 1376 a Confucian scholar in Haizhou, Bing Zheng, reported: “Recently I have seen that many Mongols have changed

³² YS 33: 746. Basic annals of Wenzong.

³³ YS 200: 4495-4496. *Lienü Zhuan*.

³⁴ Sanangchechen, *Menggu Yuanliu*, v. 5. “when the country was in great disorder, among the four hundred thousand Mongols who were fighting in different places only sixty thousand succeeded in escaping, the other three hundred forty thousand Mongols fell into the enemies.”

³⁵ Feng Li, “Yuan dai Menggu zu xingshi Hanhua qian xi,” *Chengde minzu shizhuan xuebao*, 3 (2007): 51.

their surnames to Chinese surnames, and are not distinctive from Chinese people. Among them some people have applied for official positions. Some have become famous, and some have become rich merchants.”³⁶ Another Ming scholar, Qiu Rui also reported, “At the beginning of this dynasty, the Mongols and *semu* people changed their names and lived together with ordinary people. They are just like one or two stalks of millet in the rice field. With time, they will forget their identity and will be transformed. They will not be easily identified.”³⁷ In addition, the rulers of the Ming dynasty enacted special laws forbidding the Mongols and the *semu* people from marrying people of their own nationalities. These laws, of course, hastened the process of Sinicization.

³⁶ *Ming Taizu shilu*, Taipei, Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan lishi Yuyan Yanjiusuo, *juan* 109, (1962): 5.

³⁷ Qiu Rui, *Daxue yanyi bu*. Haikou: Haikou Shuju, *juan* 144, p. 105.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Social Position of Mongol Women and the Political Involvement of Mongol Empresses

The Social Position of Mongol Women

Basic differences existed between the social status of women in a nomad society and a sedentary society, and most of the differences can be explained by the ways of life of the two different types of societies. Herbert Franke points out that in a nomad society where many adult males were away on long hunting expeditions or in warfare, the responsibility of caring for the household and the education of children fell upon the wives. This resulted in a relatively greater independence of the women who had to act as heads of the household during the absence of their husbands.¹ This is partially true where Mongol women's responsibilities are concerned. However, a husband and a wife were often together, even in times of war. The *ahuruq* military system is an example, which was translated as "a camp of old and young" (*laoxiao ying*). It referred to the camp where the families of Mongol army remained, and was responsible for the supplies of the Mongol army. Therefore, most of the time, it moved along with the army.²

A Mongol woman who married into a tribe was certainly never sheltered from the heavy labor and intertribal warfare characteristic of nomadic pastoral societies. Morris Rossabi also points out,

The insecurities of steppe life required each member of a family, clan, or tribe to pull his or her own weight. Horses needed to be herded and led to pasture; sheep had to be sheared and ewes milked; and tents (known as *gers* or *yurts*) had to be pitched, then dismantled, and erected again in another location as the tribe moved to a new grazing area. Without the cooperation of both men and women, the chores which were essential for the subsistence of nomadic pastoralism could not be completed,

¹ Herbert Franke, 'Women under the Dynasty of Conquest', in *China under Mongol Rule*, Variorum, 1994.

² For a discussion of the important functions of *ahuruq*, see Li Zhi'an, "Qixue yu Yuandai chaozheng", *Zhongguoshi yanjiu*, 4 (1990): 110-117.

and the tribe's or family's survival would be threatened. Women were required to share physically demanding tasks with men.³

Mongol women were responsible for all the domestic duties, producing the simple necessities for pastoral life. They cooked meals, made clothing, and were also expected to manage the carts, and the loading or unloading of the yurts and other belongings. They milked the cows, goats, and sheep, and made cheese and butter. They tanned the hides of animals and sewed them with the tendons of horses or oxen. They also made felt to cover houses. The important role played by women involved in household management allowed them to gain high status in family life, and Xiao Daheng in the early Ming dynasty recorded: "It is said that the barbarian men are always controlled by women." He also tried to explain this phenomenon,

It is not only because the women are shrewish, but it is also because the husbands have to rely on them. All the clothing, hats and shoes, big things and small things, are all made by their hands. The husbands know only how to hold a bow to hunt, otherwise they can do nothing. The women at ordinary times attend to their duties just like a hen crows in the early morning, and if they get angry they will roar as a lion. They are arrogant because they have made a lot of contributions, their behavior is unbridled because they have done hard work, it is this which makes them act like that.⁴

The important role of women in the economy also aided them in attaining a relatively higher social position in Mongol society. In some cases, a woman could even command an army, and one well-known example is that of Chinggis Khan's mother Hö'elun who led the first of the thirteen wings of his army when he fought against the combined forces of Jamuka and Ong-Khan. It is also well-known that Mongol Empresses in the first half of the thirteenth-century also played important political roles and *de facto* ruled the empire. Several times during the thirteenth century, the Mongol empire was ruled by imperial widows, the most famous among them being Töregene, Ögödei's widow who formally ruled the empire from 1241 to 1246, and Oghul Qaimish, the widow of Güyük, who ruled from 1249 to 1251. Moreover, the wives of the generals often accompanied their husbands on military expeditions. Khans and Princes often discussed military or political affairs with their *khatuns* Chinggis Khan prescribed in the *Jasagh* that "Women accompanying the troops carry out the work and duties of the men

³ Morris Rossabi: "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family", (1979)

⁴ Xiao Daheng, *Beilu fengsu*. quoted in Henry Serruys, "Remains of Mongol Customs during the Early Ming Period". *The Mongols and Ming China: Customs and History*. Edited by Francoise Aubin, Variorum Reprints, London, 1987.

when the men go to war.”⁵ Princesses of the khan’s family had the rights to take part in the general assembly, the *khuriltai*, when important decisions were taken, and the high status of imperial Princesses is reflected in Yuan legislation where Princesses are normally mentioned as a special category apart from the Princes and Imperial Sons-in-law.

In yet another area of their lives, Mongolian women enjoyed some degree of freedom in choosing their own marriages. Xiao Daheng in “*Yisu ji*” tells us that “Among the barbarians, marriage is based only on the happiness of the man and woman, if the girl and the boy are well-matched in age, they are permitted to marry,”⁶ and “If a woman is not happy (with her marriage), then her husband will let her remarry (someone else). The husband will have to swallow this and dare not say anything.”⁷ This was probably an exaggeration, or it occurred only among the women of the aristocrats, since there is evidence that, generally speaking, the marriage of a Mongol woman would be determined by her parents. This can be seen in *The Secret History*. Temujin’s father Yesugei went to Dei Sechen’s tribe to look for a wife for Temujin when he was nine years old, and Dei Sechen, the father of Börte Ujin, invited Yesugei and his son to his home to see his daughter and between them, they determined the marriage. According to Mongol custom, a widow could inherit her husband’s property and become the family head if their sons were still young, and she would occupy this position until she died, even after her sons had grown up.

In spite of these examples, one should not overestimate the social position of Mongol women, since we find a rather ambivalent attitude towards women among the Mongols. On the one hand, in ancient Mongol society, men and women were actually viewed as unequal both in family life and marriage with men being deemed honorable and women humble. Early Mongols believed that “women are short of knowledge” and “women are [like] a dog’s face,”⁸ and unfortunately, this inequality was believed by women themselves. Rashid al-din recorded some words of the wife of Yitiemuer,

A man both has power and is the master, and a wife is only his dependant. Therefore she should make efforts to make her husband satisfied, and do not make him

⁵ Valentin A. Riasanovsky, *Foundamental Principles of Mongol Law*, Bloomington: Indiana University reprint, (1965): 153, David Ayalon, “The Great Yasa” of Chingiz Kan, *Studia Islamica* XXXVIII (1973): 107-156.

⁶ Xiao Daheng, *Beilu fengsu*.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ YCMS, P. 109, annotated by Chen Binhe Shangwu Yinshu Guan, 1933.

disappointed, and do housework as instructed by him. If she can do things like this, her husband's love towards her will undoubtedly increase.⁹

As in many societies, a woman could even be offered as a gift. Chinggis Khan granted one of his wives, Yibahe, to one of his generals, Zhuer-Chedai, and Ong-Khan presented his daughter to Tuohei-tuoa, the chief of Merkit tribe, in order to get permission to pass through Merkit territory.¹⁰ Another example is that when Dayier Wusun of the Mierqi tribe was defeated, he presented his daughter Hulan to Chinggis Khan, in order to curry favor with him.¹¹ In cases of urgency, women could be forsaken like troublesome belongings, so that when Chinggis was pursued and attacked by the Merqit tribe in his youth, he rode two horses to escape, leaving his wife Börte and his father's concubine who had no horses to ride to be consequently captured by the Merqit.¹² Hasar (Chinggis's younger brother) abandoned his wife to Ong-Khan's troops while he ran for his life.¹³ And finally, women's words were often blamed as a root cause of failures or mistakes. Jamuka believed that one of the sources of his failure was the fact that "my wife is a long-tongued woman".¹⁴ Ögödei Khan counted among the mistakes of his reign as "having listened to a woman's words and taken the women from my uncle Otchigin's state."¹⁵

⁹ *Shi Ji* Vol. 1a, p 134.

¹⁰ YCMS, annotated by Chen Binhe, (1933): 98.

¹¹ YCMS, annotated by Chen Binhe, (1933): 120

¹² YCMS, (1933): 39-41

¹³ YCMS, (1933): 103.

¹⁴ YCMS, (1933): 126

¹⁵ YCMS, (1933): 183, Ögödei Khan often listened to his sixth wife Naimazhen Tuolie Gena (Töregene). She was originally a concubine of Hudu, the eldest son of Tuohei Tuoa, the chief of the Merkit tribe. When Chinggis Khan conquered the Merkit and captured Töregene, he granted her to his son Ögödei. (see YCMS, p. 122). Töregene was the mother of Güyük. After Ögödei's death she was the regent for four years.

YS 2:35. See the basic annals of Taizong. "In the sixth month of the ninth year [of Taizong's reign] (1237), a rumor arose among the tribes of the Left Wing that the Emperor was going to select girls from their tribes. The Emperor was angry and therefore gathered all of their young women and granted them to his generals and subordinates."

D'Ohsson, Constantin d', baron, *Historie des Mongols, Duosang Menggushi*, trans, Feng Chengjun. Taibei, Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, (1963). "There was a rumor spreading in the Oirati tribe that the Khan was going to marry the young women in their tribe to men in other tribes. The Oirati people were afraid, and they hastily made marriage contracts, with several of them already holding marriage ceremonies. When Ögödei learned of this, he issued an order collecting all the young girls who were seven years old or above and those who were newly married in that year in the tribe, and arranged them in two lines. In total, there were four thousand of them. Ögödei himself selected the most beautiful girls from them and took them to his palace. He granted some of them to his subjects, and sent

The marriages of Mongol Princesses also elucidate the social position of Mongol women, showing that they were often the victims of political and military strategies of the Mongol royal family. They could not determine their own marriages, but were presented to unknown men by the khans and Emperors who were their elders. No matter how old the men were, or of what type, once a marriage was decided by the elder males of her family, the Princess had to sacrifice her body and emotions, and obey her destiny for the sake of the interests of the royal family. With few exceptions, such as Princess Alahai Beki, most of them remained obscure their whole lives and left no traces in history, so that we know nothing of the quality of their marriages. What we do know is that many of them never bore children. For example, among the nine Mongolian Princesses who were married to the Korean rulers, only four had children.¹⁶

While this does not, by itself, prove unhappy marriage, we should also note that these Princesses died early, and in a later chapter, I provide the specific causes of their deaths. We will see that although the Mongol Princesses seemed powerful in Korea, their marriage lives were mostly miserable. Their misfortunate fate can be ascribed to the roles they played in Korea. They were married to the leaders of a former enemy state of the Mongols whose submission was shaky, and in Korea, rebellions, disloyalty, and disobedience occurred frequently. There is little evidence that Korean kings loved the Mongol brides they were forced to marry, and did little to defend them from the jealousy and hatred of the other wives of the Korean kings. Officials in the Korean court seem to have seen the Mongol Princesses, who were in fact their queens, as symbols of Mongol dominance over their homeland, and hated them accordingly. So blatant was their hatred that rumor arose at the time, suggesting that that some Mongol Princesses were cursed or tortured to death, and the Yuan court sent agents to Korea to investigate. These agents arrested many people. But as far as we can tell, the results of the investigations or interrogations were never announced.

I have identified eighty-four Mongol Princesses who were married into the six tribes or states which maintained the most stable marriage relationship with the Mongol royal family. Among them, twenty-two, or 26 percent, died early. They make up twenty-six percent of the total Princesses.

the rest to brothels. But there were still some left, (Ögödei) ordered the standby [troops] to take them as they liked." If, as identified by Ögödei himself, this idea was initiated by his wife, Töregene, then she was really deserved the blame.

¹⁶ Xiao Qiqing, "Yuan Li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin yu qiangquan zhengzhi" *Yuandaishi xintan* Xin Wen Feng Chuban Gongsi, (1983).

TABLE 1: Deaths of Married Mongol Princesses under the Age of 35

Tribe Name	No. of Married Yuan Princesses	No. of Princesses Who Died Probably Before Age of 35	Percentage of Early Death
Onggirat	22	3	14%
Ikires	18	5	28%
Oirat	16	3	19%
Öngüt	16	3	19%
Korea	8	5	63%
Uighur	7	3	43%
Sum	87	22	31%

Obviously, the Princesses who married into the Uighur Idi-qut's family and the Korean royal family have the highest early death rate, at 63% and 43% respectively; while the Princesses who married into the Onggirat tribe have the lowest early death rate at 14%. It seems natural, though not conclusive to speculate that their high early death rate was attributable to their inability to adapt to the unfamiliar environments, climates, life styles, customs, and cultures. Nonetheless, as we have discussed in Chapter 2, consanguineous marriage and inbreeding in the Mongol imperial family may also have played a part since their genetic heritage pre-disposed them to illness and early death.

I must acknowledge that the numbers in the chart cannot be precise because of the nature of the sources. I employed a simple inference strategy to determine the early death of the Princesses based on records of the biographies in the *Yuanshi*. For example, the Korean Prince of Ch'ungsug, Wang To, first married Princess Yilianzhenbala. When she died, he married "Princess Supreme of the State of Cao," Jintong. After Jintong died, he married the Princess of Qinghua, Boyanhudu. I then determined that Yilianzhenbala and Jintong died "early", and, based on other sources, I have found that Boyanhudu actually died when she was about 27 years old.

For most of the Princesses, the sources available do not tell us when they married or when they died. The following table derived from the *Koryosa*¹⁷ can only offer enough of an approximation to be suggestive, since accurate records of Mongol inter-tribal marriages are lacking.

¹⁷ In the *Koryosa*, we have enough information on light of the nine Mongol /Korean queens.

This table was made based on the records in the *Koryŏsa*.¹⁸ We have the basic information for eight of the nine Princesses whose birth years and marriage years are available to infer their ages at death.

TABLE 2: *Age at Death of Mongol Princesses Married to Korean Kings*

Princess Name	Birth Year— Death Year	Marriage Year	Age at Death	Years in Marriage
Khudulu(gh) Khaimish	1258-1296	1274	38	22
Botashirin	? —1343	1296	~63	47
Yesujin	? —1316	?	?	?
Irinjinbala	? —1319	1316	~19	3
Kimdong	1307—1325	? 1326	18	? 1
Bayan Khudu	? —1344	1333	~27	11
Nolun	? —1329	1316	~29	13
Irinjinbal	? —1375	1330	~61	45
Botasirin	? —1365	1349	~32	16
			Average Age at Death: 33 (260/8)	Average Years in Marriage: 18 (146/8)

In my own view, most marriages took place when the bride was sixteen, which I believe to be close to the real marriage age at that time. For example, Khudulu(gh) Khaimish, the daughter of Khubilai Khan, married the Korean King, Wang Sim, when she was 16 (1274-1258=16). This is one of the few accurate datings we possess.

Surprisingly, five out of the eight Princesses whose death ages are known died before thirty. They make up 63% of the total data. It seems to me that this is one indication of the quality of their marriages, especially since, in every case, their husbands survived them, even though they were older than their wives.

¹⁸ KRS, Chong In-ji tung ch'an. Seoul T'ukpyolsi : Asea Muhwasa, (1972).

The Political Involvements of Mongol Empresses Before and During the Yuan

It is often suggested that the high political profile of imperial wives and Princesses during the early Sui-Tang (seventh-eighth centuries), whose early rulers were married to steppe women, was the result of the relatively high status of women in steppe society. In a similar manner, the well-documented concern of the founder of the Ming dynasty to restrict the power of imperial wives in the fourteenth-century has been seen as a reaction against the authority assumed by such women in the preceding Mongol Yuan era.¹⁹

Mongol Empresses played very important political roles both before and after the establishment of the Mongol Empire. On the one hand, they had the absolute right to participate in the *khuriltai* to determine the major issues of the Mongol Empire, and in particular, played a crucial part in the election and enthronement of new leaders and Emperors. On the other hand, they often became regents, with direct control over the government. On occasion, they represented Emperors who were too old or too ill to handle state affairs, and it seems clear that they influenced the Emperors in policy or decision-making procedures throughout their reign.

The political power of Mongol Empresses was legitimate by Mongolian customary laws (or *Yosun* in Mongolian language). On the one hand, they had the right to participate in the *khuriltai*, a Mongol noble conference, to determine the major issues of the Mongol Empire. In particular, they played an important part in the election and enthronement of new Khan or Emperors. They often became regents with direct command over the government, or they represented the Emperors who were too old or too ill to handle state affairs. In some cases, they influenced the Emperors in policy or decision-making procedures.

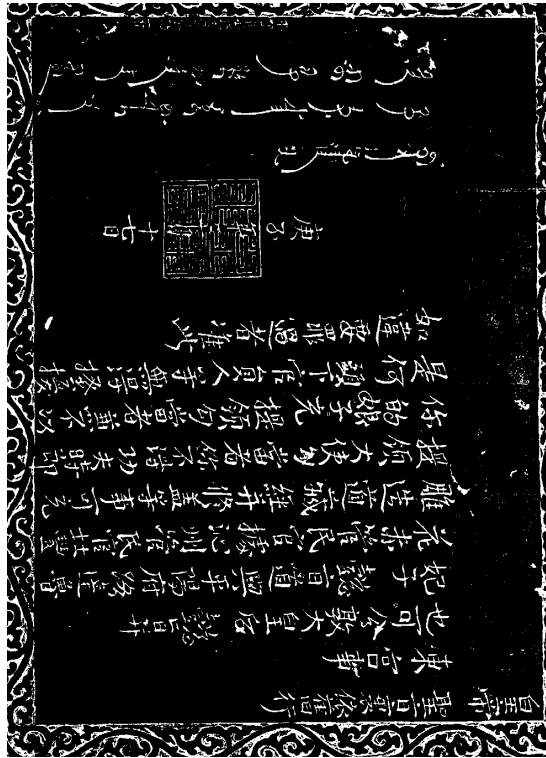
Let us examine this phenomenon.

One piece of distinctive evidence for the power of Mongol Empresses is that they held the authority to set up their own government offices to issue decrees to the local governments. The decrees of Empress and Imperial Concubines were called “*yizhi*” (exemplary edict), to differentiate them from the “*shengzhi*” (imperial edict) of Emperors and “*lingzhi*” (princely decree) of Princes of the blood.

And there were numerous other examples of female political power both before and after the establishment of the Yuan. The following is a decree issued by Töregene, the senior wife of Ögödei Khan, in 1240 when Ogodei

¹⁹ J. Holmgren, “Imperial Marriage...” (1991): 58-96.

was still alive. Like standard official documents under Mongol rule, this decree was originally in the Mongolian language in Uighur script and was then translated into vernacular Chinese.



6. A Decree Issued by Töregene (?-1246, Wife of Ögödei) in 1240 to Local Governments²⁰

The following is a translation of this inscription:

Executing the imperial decrees issued by the Emperor as usual to be in charge of the issues of the east palace, the Great Empress--Yeke Khatun and the imperial concubines have issued the following decree to the *darughuachi* of the Pingyang prefecture: with regard to the issue that the governor of Qinzhou, Du Feng, is to print Taoist classics and to do construction work, you can be the chief envoy. If you do not have the time, your wife can be the chief envoy. No officials of any fiefs should interfere. If they do, they should be [considered] guilty. This is our approval.

²⁰ Hu Wu, "Meng Yuan huanghou yu Yuanchao zhengzhi", *Qiusuo*, 3 (1990): 121-125.

This is a very significant indicator of the power of the Empress. It reveals two important facts about women's status under the Mongol rule or at least during the reign of Ögödei Khan. First, Empresses and Imperial Concubines had the authority to issue decrees to local governments; and secondly, the wives of local officials were entitled to act as substitutes for them to deal with governmental affairs.

During the reigns of the thirteen Mongol khans and the Emperors of the Yuan dynasty, eleven Empresses were actively involved in governmental affairs,²¹ and some Empress-dowagers partially or even fully controlled the Yuan Emperors through several reigns. The trend in the Yuan dynasty was an escalation of the influence of Empresses and the decline of the power of the Emperors.

Empresses as Regents

Mongol women took a great interest and undertook important responsibilities in politics since early times in Mongolian society. Chinggis Khan's mother Hö'elun and his wife Börte Ujin helped him make many important decisions in his political and military career. Sorghaghtani-Beki, the wife of Tolui, also greatly influenced politics in the reigns of Ögödei Khan, Güyük Khan, and Möngke Khan. "In any business which Qa'an (Ögödei) undertook, whether with regard to the weal of the Empire or the disposal of the army, he used to consult and confer with her and would suffer no change or alteration of whatever she recommended."²² Khubilai's wife Chabui made great contributions to the founding of the Yuan dynasty by her foresight and sagacity, his daughter-in-law, the wife of the Crown Prince Jin Gim, displayed her political talents and was appreciated by Khubilai.²³

In the early World Empire (1260-1271), the Mongol Khans were elected at the *khuriltai*. In principle all the Mongol Princes, Princesses, and nobles were required to attend this assembly. An Empress would be expected to be temporarily in charge of the affairs of the empire before a new khan (Emperor) was elected. When that *khuriltai* could not be held on time, the wife of the deceased khan would become regent and govern the whole empire until the *khuriltai* was held.

One Mongolian custom was that the youngest son was entitled to inherit the family property, and based on this, some have claimed that the youngest

²¹ Ibid.

²² *World Conqueror*. Vol. II, pp. 551-52.

²³ . "His (Jin Gim's) wife, Kökejin by name, was very intelligent and the Qa'an was on very good terms with her and did whatever she commanded." Rashid Al-Din, *The Successors*. p. 299.

son was entitled to inherit the throne.²⁴ However, there is no clear evidence from any *khuriltai*. It is also suggested that the eldest son had the priority to succeed to the throne, but the fact that Chinggis Khan did not permit his eldest son, Jochi, succeed to his throne and designated his third son Ögödei as the Crown Prince instead indicates that this too, was not an institutional law.

In short, it seems there was no statutory succession law. This enabled a number of Mongolian Empresses to play an important role in the political arena of the Mongol empire, and they were often entrusted by the Mongol Princes with the affairs of the empire in the absence of khans during a transitional period. Most of the time, they were able to effectively and fairly conduct state affairs with the help of ministers until a new Khan was elected.

As the tablet inscription cited above indicates, Töregene began to issue decrees to local governments while Ögödei was still alive, and she subsequently became regent after Ögödei died, remaining in that position for five years. According to Rashid Al-Din, she was a master manipulator as she sought support of the Princes. "Töregene Khatun, who was the mother of the eldest son, making use of all the arts of diplomacy, seized possession of the kingdom by herself without consulting *aqā* and *ini* and wooed the hearts of kinsfolk and emirs with all manner of gifts and presents until they all inclined toward her and came under her control."²⁵

According to Rashid Al-Din, during this period the government was in chaos until she handed over power to her son Güyük. "In that time of interregnum and confusion, everyone sent ambassadors in every direction and broadcast drafts and assignments; and on every side they attached themselves to parties and clung to such protection, each with a different pretext."²⁶ Rashid Al-Din's words might have reflected the view of his patrons, the Tolui line, to justify their seizure of state power from Ögödei's line, but it is true that during this period, there was a serious challenge for Töregene. Otchigin Noyan, the younger brother of Chinggis Khan, attempted to seize the throne by force and set out a large army to the capital of the empire. Töregene was frightened and even planned to flee from the capital.²⁷

²⁴ Juvaini said, "By the *yasa* and custom of the Mongols the father's place passes to the youngest son by the chief wife. Such as Ulugh-Noyan (Tolui), but it was Chinggis-Khan's *yasa* that Ögödei should be khan..." *World Conqueror*, Vol. II, p. 549. This account is obviously contradictory. It implied that there were no definite stipulations for the succession in Chinggis Khan's *yasa*.

²⁵ *The Successors*, pp. 176, 178. The number of years Rashid records is not correct. The regency of Töregene was five years, not three years.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 178.

²⁷ *Yuanshi, juan* 146, p. 3464.

Fortunately for her, at this crucial moment, her son Güyük returned from the West with a large army. Otchigin Noyan withdrew his army and the crisis was resolved.

Töregene probably did not intend to remain as regent for long, but she was determined to put her own son, Güyük, on the throne. Initially Ögödei favored his third son, Qochu, and was inclined to let him succeed his throne, but when he died in the war against the Song, Ögödei transferred his favor to Qochu's son Shiremün. In 1241, he designated Shiremün as heir-apparent and issued a decree saying that Shiremün should succeed to the throne after his death.

But Töregene opposed his will, showing the independence of Mongol women in positions of power. Once she decided to put her own son, Güyük, on the throne, she stopped at nothing. She sent ambassadors to the East and West of the world to summon the Princes and invited them to the *khuriltai*.²⁸ Because the oldest sons of all the Princes had gone to conquer the Western Regions, the *khuriltai* was postponed. It was finally held in 1246, and as she had planned, her son Güyük was then elected as the new khan.

Güyük's reign was short-lived and lasted for only two years (1246-48). This gave his wife, Oghul-Qaimish²⁹ an opportunity to demonstrate her own political talent to defend the khanate for Ögödei's line in spite of political pressure from Tolui's line. She first sent messengers to Sorqotani Beki and Batu to inform them of the death of Güyük. Then, after consulting and deliberating with the various ministers, she decided to set out herself for Emil, where the former *ordo* of Güyük Khan was situated. Sorqotani Beki sent her clothing and a *boghtagh*³⁰ together with messages of advises and condolence, while Batu consoled and comforted her in a similar manner. Batu further suggested that Qghul-Ghaimish should become Regent to administer affairs of state together with the minister and attend to all that was necessary. On the pretext that his horses were lean, he set up camp at Ala-Qamaq.³¹ These were, it seems, political games designed to slacken the vigilance of Qghul-Ghaimish and schemes for his own ambition.

Although Qghul-Ghaimish had two sons, she decided to place her nephew, the son of Qochu, Shiremün, on the throne. This followed the will of Ögödei. However, Sorqotani Beki and Batu learned of her plan and took

²⁸ *Ibid.* P. 179.

²⁹ Chinese sources do not mention her family background. According to Juvaini and Rashid al-Din, she was from the Oirat tribe. Her father was the tribal chieftain of the Oirat tribe, Qutuqa Beki.

³⁰ A Mongolian style female cap.

³¹ *World Conqueror*, vol. 1, pp. 262-63.

preemptive measures by holding a *khuriltai* at Alactac Mountain in Central Asia, intending to put Möngke, the son of Tolui, on the throne. The Princes of Ögödei's family Khoja and Naqu refused to attend this meeting with the pretext that the *khuriltai* should be held in the traditional Mongol territory. When Khoja and Naqu discovered the result of the *khuriltai*, they were very angry and sent messengers to Batu saying: "We will not consent to the election of another Khan. We shall never connive at that agreement." According to Juvaini, Sorghaghtani-Beki and Batu tried every possible means to persuade them to accept the result of the *khuriltai*. She sent a messenger to them, saying, "At any rate you should come to the *khuriltai*, and take counsel and deliberate together a second time when all the *aqqa* and *ini* are assembled together."³² Batu further promised that if the Khanate were settled on Möngke, most of the advantages would accrue to them. However, when Möngke finally ascended the throne, he immediately began a political purge. Oghul-Ghaimish and many others in Ögödei's family were put to death or thrown in prison. After this setback Ögödei's line was never able to recover.

When Möngke Khan died at the front in the conquest of the Southern Song in 1259, a political struggle occurred between Khubilai and his younger brother Arigh Böke. Supported by a large number of Mongol Princes, Arigh Böke planned to ascend the throne in Karakorum. Khubilai's wife Chabui promptly sent an envoy to warn him about the plan, and urged him to return.³³ Khubilai immediately withdrew his troops from Hubei in southern China, and proclaimed himself as the new khan in 1260 in a small size *Khuriltai* in Kaiping, the capital he built in southern Mongolia. He declared to the public that he was the best qualified successor to the throne of the Mongol Empire, "As we can see today, among the grandsons of Taizu (Chinggis Khan), and the younger brothers of the former Emperor (Möngke), I am the only one who is of sufficient age and qualification."³⁴ But since the *Khuriltai* was not held in the region of Onan and Kelüren in Mongolia, and only a small number of Mongol Princes and nobles attended the assembly, strictly speaking, Khubilai's enthronement was illegitimate. Thus throughout his reign Khubilai was vexed by the attacks of rebel Mongol Princes.

³² *aqqa* and *ini*: (Mo.) the elder and younger brothers.

³³ The biography of Chabui in *Yuanshi* explicitly praises her for "it was she who clearly saw the critical opportunity, therefore [Khubilai] withdrew troops from E (Hubei); it was she who assisted [Khubilai] with schemes which helped [Khubilai] ascend the throne." See *Yuanshi*, *juan* 114, p. 2872.

³⁴ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 4, p. 64.

Since the beginning of his reign, Khubilai had been prompted by his Chinese political advisors to replace the old Mongol succession institution by the Chinese primo-geniture system in order to achieve an orderly succession to the Great Khanate and to avoid dislocation and disruption to the Mongol Empire. This became appealing and possible only after Khubilai secured his throne in the Mongol Empire, and shortly after 1260 when Khubilai defeated Arigh Bōke in the first campaign thanks to Chinese and Mongol troops, his political advisor Hao Jing urged him “to designate an heir apparent to avoid chaos.”³⁵ Khubilai realized, however, that adopting the Chinese succession practice would arouse strong protests of the Mongol nobles because it would completely destroy the traditional Mongol *khuriltai*. Mongol Princes from Mongolia, Central Asia, and West Asia were already resentful because they believed that Khubilai had already become too Chinese by adopting the Chinese governmental system, and Khubilai was surely aware of this. At the same time, his Chinese advisors were persuasive. Zhang Xiongfei said, “the designation of heir apparent is the foundation of the state. It should be determined as soon as possible to reassure the people. Even the common people in the alleyways know that they should bequeath to their children the little grain they have stored. The land under heaven is so vast, and state affairs are so important, that it would be unwise to fail to designate an heir apparent early. If the former Emperor had understood this, would you have the chance to become the Emperor?”³⁶ The last words truly shocked Khubilai who suddenly sat up in his bed exclaiming repeatedly, “Yes! Yes!”³⁷

In 1273, Khubilai finally determined to designate his son Jin Gim as the heir apparent, but the other Mongol Princes and nobles saw this only as a nomination, insisting that Khubilai’s successor had to be elected at the *khuiltai*. Khubilai therefore did not dare to announce that his successor would not be elected at the *khuriltai*, especially since he himself had never been legitimized by a full-scale *khuriltai*. Throughout his reign it had been his intention to hold a real *khuriltai* in Mongolia to do so, but unfortunately the Mongol empire was too sprouting and too divided to summon all the Princes to come together. His struggle with Arigh Bōke had ended the existence of the united political entity of the Yeke Mongol Ulus, making it

³⁵ Hao Jing: *Lingchuan ji*, juan 32, “*Bianyi xinzheng*”. In *Si Ku Quanshu* (electronic version), *jingbu*, Dizhi wenhua chubanshe youxian gongsi, 2002.

³⁶ *Yuanshi*, juan 163, pp. 3819-20. “The former Emperor” refers to Möngke Khan, who truly did not designate an heir apparent. He entrusted his younger brother Arigh Bōke to govern Mongolia when he went on campaign to conquer the Southern Song. But Arigh Bōke was certainly not his successor.

³⁷ *Ibid*, juan 163, p. 3820.

impossible for Khubilai to gain genuine political authority over other khanates, and eventually he became nothing more than a Chinese Emperor.

The Interventions of Mongol Empresses in Yuan Dynasty Politics

While Chinese custom, when a Mongol Emperor was too old or too ill to fulfill his duties, his principal Empress was entitled by accepted practice to handle governmental affairs on his behalf. In 1283, when Khubilai was 69 years old, Nambui became his principal Empress, and as Khubilai's health declined, she gradually became involved in political life. In his latter years Khubilai lived in Nambui's *ordo*, and his ministers were often unable to see him and had to entrust Nambui with the transmission of their reports and memorials to Khubilai. She, in turn, handed down his decisions and edicts.

This woman has long been ignored by historians because the information about her is too scarce. The authors of the *Yuanshi* wrote a very short biography for Nambui, which does not mention that she made any specific political decisions.³⁸ On the other hand, records about her in Persian sources are inaccurate and misleading. Khubilai married Nambui in 1283 and died in 1294, so it seems inconceivable that Nambui did not do anything significant for Khubilai or the Yuan court during this eleven-year period. Since she was personally assertive and politically influential, it is hard to believe that she would voluntarily give up the opportunity to become an Empress-dowager and put her own son on the throne after Khubilai's death. She must have made decisions which made her enemies, and certainly she became involved in a political struggle with her husband's daughter-in-law, Jin Gim's wife, Kökejin, and two powerful military generals, Bayan and Yuxi-Tiemur. As far as we know, when Khubilai died, Kökejin, Bayan, and Yuxi-Tiemur acted quickly to seize power from Nambui, and her ally, the chancellor Wanze. Bayan became the interim regent, and "he ordered that all government officials give heed to him."³⁹

³⁸ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 114, p. 2873. The biography of Nambui in *Yuanshi* affirms that "She was conferred the title of empress in the twentieth year of the Zhiyuan era to live in the principal empress's palace. At that time Shizu was very old, so this empress was gradually involved in politics. The chancellors and the ministers could not see the Emperor frequently, and had to report things through the empress. She gave birth to one son named Tiemiechi."

³⁹ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 127, p. 3115.

According to Rashid, for nearly one year before the *khuriltai* was held, Kökejin, the widow of Jin Gim, administered the affairs of the realm,⁴⁰ though actually the period from the death of Khubilai to the succession of Temür lasted for only three months.⁴¹ These measures were obviously designed to halt Nambui's attempt to become regent. Since her son Tiemiechi was only ten years old when Khubilai died, and she had established her own political authority and competence in the late years of Khubilai's reign, she had enough advantages to launch a campaign to become regent and place her own son on the throne.

After Jin Gim, his heir-apparent, died in 1285, Khubilai did not designate a replacement until the year before his death when he chose his grandson, Temür, the son of Jin Gim, as his successor.

The decision was bound to be unpopular, for as we know, Khubilai had many sons. His principal Empress Chabui bore him four sons, of whom, Duorzhi and Jin Gim predeceased him. However, the other two sons, Mangqala and Namuhan, were both alive and seemed well-qualified to succeed. This was a recipe for dissension, and there was a fierce succession struggle.

The primary opponent of Temür was his own elder brother, Kamala, who held the title Prince of Jin, and had built a strong base of support among the Princes of the northern steppes. He governed the four *ordos* of Chinggis Khan and their armies, as well as all the Tartar territories.⁴² He was a formidable foe, and once again, the intervention of Kökejin was critical. She bought a national heirloom, a jade seal from the descendants of the former Mongol king Muqali, gave it to Temür, and announced that it was from Khubilai Khan, bestowed to legitimize his claim to the khanate.⁴³ In addition, she claimed before the assembled that "Chechen-Qa'an (that is, Khubilai Qa'an) said that whoever knew the *biligs* of Chingiz-Khan best should ascend the throne. Now, therefore, let each of you recite his *biligs* so that the great men who are present may see which knows them better."⁴⁴ Because Temür was extremely eloquent and a good reciter, he declaimed the *biligs* well and with a pure accent, while Kamala, having something of a stammer and not being as talented in this respect, was unable to match him in the

⁴⁰ *The Successors*, 8:320.

⁴¹ Khubilai died in the first month of 1294, while Temür ascended the throne in the fourth month of 1294.

⁴² Zhao Mengfu, *Song Xuezhai Wenji*—"Waiji-Puqing Si Bei". Quoted in Zhou Liangxiao, "Menggu Xuan Han Yizhi yu Huangwei Jicheng Wenti", in *Yuanshi Luncong*, vol. 3. P.43.

⁴³ Li Xianshen, *Zhongguo Houfei Yiwen*, Liaoning: Shenyang Chubanshe. 1992. P. 368.

⁴⁴ *The Successors*, 8:321. "*biligs*" means "wise sayings".

contest. According to Rashid, all cried out with one voice: “Temür Qa’an knows them better and recites them better also. It is he that is worthy of crown and throne.”⁴⁵

This was very likely an unfair competition, since Kökejin was obviously partial to Temür, she may have prepared him for the recital and made his last-minute proposal knowing that Kamala had difficulties in verbal expressions.

Although Temür had emerged victorious the competition, the struggle continued. Even when Temür was about to officially ascend the throne in the Da’an Palace (Palace of Great Peace) in Shangdu, the other Princes continued their protests.

When Chengzong was ascending the throne in the Da’an Palace in Shangdu, the other Princes complained. Bayan held high his sword, standing on the steps of the palace. He stated the lessons of the ancestors, announced the orders of the deceased Emperor, and explained the reason and the importance of placing Chengzong on the throne. His words and facial expressions were very stern. All the Princes were shaking in their boots and were forced to kneel down in front of the palace.⁴⁶

Chinese sources, the only one we have, are strangely silent about Nanbui’s activities during this crucial period. Did she and her son fall victim to the alliance of Kökejin and Bayan? Were they murdered? We shall, perhaps, never know. Nanbui was not listed in the Table of Yearly Allowance (*sui ci biao*) in the *Yuanshi*. Her son Tiemiechi was not listed in the Table of Imperial Clan Genealogy.

All we know is this. Only Bayan, Buhumu, and Yuelu *noyan* were at Khubilai’s deathbed to receive the testamentary edicts. The chancellor Wanze was not allowed to enter Khuibilai’s room,⁴⁷ and it seems likely that

⁴⁵ *The Successors*, 8:321.

⁴⁶ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 127, p.3115.

⁴⁷ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 130, p. 3171. See the biography of Buhumu. “When the Emperor (Khubilai) was dying, (Buhumu), together with the Chief Censor (*yushi daifu*) Yuelu noyan and the Grand Tutor (*Tai fu*) Boyan received the testamentary edicts. They all stayed in the Forbidden City. When the chancellor Wanze arrived, he was not allowed to enter the hall. He waited until Yuelu noyan and Boyan went out, and asked, ‘my age and position are all above Buhumu, but when the state has an important issue to discuss, I am not involved. why?’ Boyan sighed and said, ‘If only you have the knowledge and understanding, what is the need for us to be so concerned?’ Wanze could not reply, but he went to talk to the empress dowager (Kökejin). The empress dowager summoned the three of them. Yuelu noyan said, “I have received the trust edict, and you can see what we are going to do. If I endanger the realm, I am ready and willing to be executed. The important matters of the state are not something that the inner court should know

this was the beginning of the plot by Kökejin and Bayan to seize power for their own section.

The first person they had to deal with was Nambui, because Khubilai had been living in her *ordo*,⁴⁸ and because Mongolian tradition therefore entitled her to make major political decisions and issue decrees on her own initiative. It was therefore necessary for Kökejin and Bayan to remove her before they could deal with other adversaries. However, according to Rashid Al-din, Nambui participated in the *khuriltai*.

How do we explain this? We know that Rashid made many errors of documentation in his records. For example, he recorded Nambui as a Princess,⁴⁹ and he did not mention what form was taken by Nambui's participation in the *khuriltai*. This evidence tenuous though it may be, suggests that she was probably not executed; and the historical reputation both of Temür and Kökejin is that they were both compassionate and kindhearted. We know, finally, that in 1331, in Wenzong's reign, Nambui was given a temple name posthumously.⁵⁰ The date of her death remains a mystery.

When Temür Öljeitü (Chengzong, r. 1295-1307) also fell prey to serious illness in his late years, his wife Bulughan played an important role in government. As the *Yuanshi* tells us, "Chengzong had always been ill, and his Empress participated in the government. She trusted the chancellor Halahasun, and the government in the Dade era was deemed to be stable and

beforehand." The term "inner court" refers to Nambui, and the statement suggests that she was deprived of any political authority.

⁴⁸ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 17, p.376. "Shizu Ji" states that, in the first month of 1294 (the thirty-first year of the Zhiyuan era), Khubilai died in the Zitan Hall. We need to clarify if the Zitan Hall belonged to the first *ordo* where Nambui lived.

⁴⁹ *The Successors*, 8:320-21. "When Qubilai Qa'an passed away in the *morin yil*, that is, in the Year of the Horse, corresponding to the year 693/1293-1294, the senior wife of Jim-Gim, who was the mother of Temür Qa'an, dispatched Bayan that very same day along with the great emirs in search of Temür Qa'an to inform him of the Qa'an's death and to bring him back so that he might sit on the throne of the Empire. For a space of a year before his return, Kökejin administered the affairs and business of the realm. Upon his auspicious arrival a great *quriltai* was held, which was attended by his uncles Kököchü, and Toghan; his brother Kamala and Yesün-Temür; princesses, such as Nambui Khatun and her daughter Bekchin Khatun, Manzitai and Kökejin Khatun." Chinese sources do not mention that Nambui had a daughter named Bekchin, and Manzitai was the imperial son-in-law of Jim-Gim. "The Princess Supreme Nan'abula, the daughter of Yuzong (Jim-Gim), married Nanzitai." See *Yuanshi*, *juan* 109, p.2758.

⁵⁰ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 35, p.780.

fair, when was all decided and handled by this Empress.”⁵¹ This indicates that the Empress successfully fulfilled her responsibilities.

At the same time, there are signs that she enjoyed the pleasures of power and was reluctant to give it up easily. Therefore when her husband died, she schemed to become regent, and failed only because Ayurbarvada, nephew of Temür, and his supporters took preemptive measures against her, and subsequently, she was murdered by Khaishan (Wuzong), the elder brother of Ayurbarvada.

According to her biography in the *Yuanshi*, Bulughan was “virtuous” in the sense admired by Confucian historian. Since the eighth year of the Dade era when Temür was seriously ill, she was involved in political affairs. But she did not arrogate all the power for herself. Instead, she entrusted the Right Chancellor Halahasun to deal with the management of government, and Halahasun was also deemed to be an able chancellor according to his biography in the *Yuanshi*.⁵²

The ambition of Bulughan was obvious and shows that Mongol women were not afraid to aspire to political power. To remove the obstacles on the road to advancement, in 1306 she ordered her potential political opponents, Daji, the wife of Talamabala,⁵³ and her son Ayurbarvada exiled from the capital. When Temür Öljeitü died the next year, Bulughan moved to become regent and put Prince Ananda, who was also the grandson of Khubilai, on the throne. But in spite of her skillful manipulations, she was thwarted by a palace coup d'état staged by Ayurbarvada. As a result, Ananda and Bulughan were both executed.⁵⁴

This incident is intriguing for two reasons: one historical, and one historiographical. Both hinge on the identity of Anandashili and whether or not he had a rightful claim to the throne. If he was the grandson of Khubilai and his principal wife Chabui, Bulughan was within her customary right as principal Empress dowager/regent to designate him as successor before holding a Khuriltai to confirm him. If he had no real claim, then we must conclude that Bulughan was planning to extend her own power through him. It is difficult to know the truth.

Chabui's biography in the *Yuanshi* tells us that she had only one son named Jin Gim, which is not true. In fact, Chabui had three sons: Jin Gim (1242-86), Manqala (?-1278), and Namughan (?-1292/1301). Jin Gim had three sons: Kamala, Talamabala, and Temür (Chengzong 1295-07). The

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, *juan* 114, p. 2873.

⁵² *Ibid.*, *juan* 136, p.291-3295.

⁵³ Second son of Khubilai's first son Jin Gim.

⁵⁴ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 22, p. 478; *juan* 106, p.2698.

second of these, Talamabala, produced Khaishan (Wuzong , r. 1308-11) and Ayurbarvada (Renzong , r.1312-20). Manqala had two sons: Ananda (?-1307) and Antanbuqa.

One of the principal advisors and supporters of Ayurbarvada was called Li Meng. In his *Yuanshi* biography, we find the following passage:

When Chengzong died, the Prince of Anxi, Ananda, expected to succeed to the throne. The Empress of Chengzong [Bulughan] supported him. The chancellor and the administrator of the Department of Military Affairs echoed their support. Meng said: “according to the decrees and rules made by Shizu (Khubilai), younger sons and sons born to concubines (*zhi zi* ⁵⁵) cannot succeed to (the throne)... many evil persons abandoned the lessons of the ancestors. They joined the Empress, trying to put a son of a concubine (*shu zi* ⁵⁶) on the throne.” ⁵⁷

We know that Li Meng played an important role in the coup d'état and also that he urged Ayurbarvada to wipe out the forces of Bulughan. For this reason, one recent scholar has accused Li Meng of alternating the official historical record and justifying the coup by claiming that Ananda was the son of the concubine.⁵⁸ We cannot be sure of the truth, but we can say with certainty, that despite her failure, Bulughan was part of growing tradition of imperial women in the Yuan dynasty who did not fear to influence the affairs of state.

Struggles between Emperors and Empress Dowagers

A recurring rhythm in the Yuan court from the death of Chengzong onward was friction, and sometimes outright struggle, between Empress-dowagers and young Emperors who sought independence once they had reached their maturity and female regencies had been ended. The case of Bulughan is the first example, and others were to follow.

Although Ayurbarvada (Renzong) and his faction had successfully destroyed the forces of Bulughan, he, like his older brother Wuzong, was unable to cast off the domination of their mother, Daji. As Empress-dowager, the political involvement of this remarkable woman was unprecedented as she successfully controlled three Yuan Emperors, and even set up her own

⁵⁵ *zhi zi*, one other than the eldest or born by concubines.

⁵⁶ *Shu zi*, a son born by a concubine.

⁵⁷ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 175, pp. 4084-86. Ananda was a Muslim. In 1278, during Khubilai's reign he inherited the title of Prince of Anxi.

⁵⁸ Li Zefen, *Yuanshi Xin Jiang*, Vol. 1, p. 187.

shadow government which issued decrees and directly appointed key government officials.

Initially there is a general agreement that Daji was the power behind the throne, making most of the critical decision during her son's eight-year reign. On one issue, however, Ayurbarvada asserted his own will. He had become Emperor through an agreement with his older brother Khaishan, that upon his death, the throne would be returned to Khaishan's line rather than to his own son. Ayurbarvada dishonored his promise, and designated his eldest son, Shidebala, as his heir.

When Shidebala (Yingzong. r. 1321-23) came to the throne in 1321, the Yuan government was still controlled by the Empress Dowager Daji and her favorite Tiemudier. Daji was determined to purge from office, all potential opponents who had been appointed by Ayurbarvada. She expected little resistance from Shidebala, but from the start, he blocked her, supporting his father's appointees. Moreover, he further defied her by embarking upon a series of political and cultural reforms designed to Sinicize his regime. For instance, he promoted a Chinese dress code among the Mongols,⁵⁹ and appointed a deeply Sinicized Mongol official, Baizhu, a descendant of Muqali, as Assistant of the Left in the Secretarial Council, to resist the power of Tiemudie. He boldly placed Chinese scholars in important governmental positions, ignoring criticism that this circumvented a policy in place since Khubilai Khan.⁶⁰ At the same time, he greatly weakened the power and forces of Daji by charging her closest intimate, Shiliemun and Heilü, with sedition, and having them executed. Shortly thereafter, he abolished the Huizheng Yuan that was specifically in charge of the affairs of Daji thereby signifying that her affairs were of little importance. When Daji and Tiemudier both died in 1322, and that same year, Shidebala executed one of Tiemudier's sons and confiscated all his property.⁶¹ This was too much for the remaining confederates of Daji and Tiemudier who till held good deal of power in the Yuan government. Tieshi, the Chief Censor who was also entrusted by Shidebala with command of the Imperial Guard, plotted a coup. In the third month of 1323, when Shidebala stayed overnight at Nanpo on his return to Dadu from Shangdu, Tieshi and a group of his accomplices

⁵⁹ Yexibaledeng (Qing), *Menggu Zheng Jiao Shi*, tr. Suluge, Minzu Chubanshe, 1989, p. 24, "The former Khans still all wore clothing of Mongol style. But this Khan (Yingzong) wore clothing of Chinese style."

⁶⁰ *Yuanshi, juan* 28, p.627.

⁶¹ *Ibid* 28:626.

murdered both him and Baizhu.⁶² This is referred to as the “Nanpo Incident”, and may be seen as a posthumous revenge of Empress Dowager, Daji.

His successor, Yisün Temür (Emperor Taidingdi, r. 1324-28), the eldest son of Kamala,⁶³ was placed on the throne after the bloody “Nanpo Incident” by the victorious faction of Tieshi. This signifies an important change in Yuan politics. Succession to the throne was now not necessarily determined by the talent and power of candidates, or the support of the Empress dowager, but by the support of rebel officials who stained with the blood of the previous Emperor. The illegitimacy of Emperor Taiding and his lower prestige among the Princes put the Yuan court into chaos. Internal political struggles often had to be resolved by force, not at *khuriltai*, which gave the powerful ministers and military generals the opportunities to control the Yuan government, and Yuan politics became more and more corrupted, finally leading to its destruction.

During the brief reign of Yisün Temür, his wife, Babuhan, was a prominent figure, and when he died suddenly at Shangdu in 1228, she wasted no time in sending envoys to Dadu to seize the seals of office in an attempt to ensure the succession of her son who had been designated the heir apparent. As we have noted, custom dictated that she was entitled to act as regent until a new Emperor was crowned, but in Dadu, some relatives and trusted followers of the former Emperor, Khaishan, decided to stage a coup d'état to enthrone one of Khaishan's sons either Khoshila or Tuq Temür. They arrested the envoys of Babuhan and announced that the throne would be returned to the lineage of Khaishan. In response, Babuhan and the Chancellor Daolasha decided to immediately enthrone her son Arijiba, and without holding a *khuriltai*, sent troops to attack Dadu to punish the rebel officials led by Yantimur, a high-ranking official of the Privy Council (*shu mi yuan*). Fierce battles raged between the armies of the two capitals, and in the end, the troops of Babuhan were defeated. At the same time, Tuq Temür ascended the throne in Dadu with the support of Yantimur, sent troops to attack Shangdu, and after a successful campaign, executed the young Emperor Arigiba (Tianshun) who had been on the throne for only one month. The fate of Babuhan is unknown.⁶⁴

Initially, Tuq Temür announced that he decided to ascend the throne because: “the holy throne cannot be empty for too long and the people cannot

⁶² *Yuanshi*, *juan* 28, p. 632-3.

⁶³ Kamala was the eldest son of Jin Gim.

⁶⁴ Her biography in the *Yuanshi* was very brief and only mentions that she was from the Onggirat clan and that she became the empress of Emperor Taiding in 1324.

do without an Emperor.”⁶⁵ And he promised that once his elder brother Khoshila arrived from the northern frontier he would return the throne to him.⁶⁶ However, when Tuq Temür defeated Emperor Tianshun with the help of Yantimur and secured his rule, he decided to dishonor his promise, and murdered Khoshila who was on his way to Dadu to take over the throne.

Tuq Temür ruled for five years (1328-32). In his reign he made great efforts to promote Chinese culture and Confucianism and was praised highly by Chinese historians. But the government was actually controlled by the powerful ministers represented by Yantimur. When Tuq Temür died in 1332, his wife Budashili was put in a difficult situation. Budashili had two sons: Alatenashina and Gunadala. The former was designated as the heir apparent in the twelfth month of 1330, but one month later, he died. Tuq Temür was so frightened that he decided to entrust his second son Gunadala to the care of Chancellor Yantimur, and changed his son's name to Yantiegi. Both Tuq Temür and Budashili were Buddhists. The death of the Crown Prince made them believe that they would be paid for the murders of Khoshila and his wife Babusha. In his last words Tuq Temür admitted that the murder of his brother Khoshila was the most serious mistake of his whole life.⁶⁷ His last will was to transfer the throne to Khoshila's son.⁶⁸

Therefore, in spite of the opposition of Yantimur, Budashili insisted to follow the will of her husband and placed the seven-year-old son of Khoshila, Irinjibal, on the throne in the eleventh month of 1332, and she herself became the regent. However, Irinjibal died suspiciously fifty-three days after he ascended the throne.⁶⁹

Then Yantimur once again urged the Empress to put Yantiegi on the throne. However, Budashili insisted that her son was too young to take such an important responsibility and that Toqon Temür should be put on the

⁶⁵ *Yuanshi*, juan 32, p.709.

⁶⁶ The reasons for Tuq Temür to do so were probably because, first of all, Khoshila was born to a Mongol woman from the Ikires tribe, while Tuq Temür was born to an alien woman from the Tangwu tribe. Thus the status of Tuq Temür was lower than that of Khoshila. On the other hand, when Tuq Temür ascended the throne, he faced strong military attacks from the forces of Emperor Tianshun. Therefore he needed the military support from his brother, Khoshila.

⁶⁷ Quan Heng, *Gengshen waishi*, in *Yuandai Biji Xiaoshuo*, vol. 3, Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1994, P.513.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p.513.

⁶⁹ In the biography of Yantimur in *Yuanshi*, it states that Irinjibal died forty-three days after he ascended the throne. But according to the study of Ren Chongyue, Irinjibal ascended the throne at the fourth day of the tenth month and died at the twenty-sixth day of the eleventh month. Therefore his reign period should be fifty-three days. See Ren Chongyue, *Gengshen Wananzheng*, Zhongzhou Guji Chubanshe, 1991, p. 10.

throne according to the last will of Wenzong. Ignoring the warnings of the director of the Department of Calendarical Affairs that “if he (Toqon Temür) is placed on the throne, there will be a great disorder under heaven,”⁷⁰ Budashili personally took charge of the ceremony to enthrone the thirteen-year-old Toqon Temür in the sixth month of 1333. At the same time an agreement was made stating that after Toqon Temür died, the throne would return to Budashili’s son—Yantiegsi.

The imprudent decision of Tuq Temür and Budashili was soon proved to be fatal to themselves. When Toqon Temür later launched his merciless retaliation for his father, the blood lineage of Tuq Temür was eventually destroyed.

When Toqon Temür ascended the throne he was no more than a puppet and was controlled by two strong forces. One of them was his aunt Budashili who had been ironically titled the Great Empress-dowager (*Tai huang taihou*), a title for grandmother and Budashili did not deserve it,⁷¹ and whose son had been designated the Heir Apparent. The other was composed of the descendants of Yantimur who died soon after Toqon Temür ascended the throne, but his younger brother Sadun occupied the position of the Assistant of the Left in the Secretarial Council; his son, Tangqishi, was the Chief Censor; and his daughter, Danashili, had been designated the Empress of Toqon Temür.

In order to achieve political independence, Toqon Temür must destroy the two forces surrounding him. As a child Emperor he displayed astonishing willpower, astuteness, and resourcefulness.

His first target was the excessive *Waiqi* influence in the government. He did so by taking advantage of the conflicts between Tang Qishi, the older brother of Empress Danashili, and Boyan, the most powerful minister. First, to balance the power of Tang Qishi, he appointed Boyan as the Assistant of the Right in the Secretarial Council, a vacancy left by Yantimur. As expected, this arrangement enraged Tang Qishi who openly complained, “The state is ours. Who is Boyan? How can he be above me?”⁷² According to the *Yuanshi*, Tang Qishi and his brother Talahai planned to stage a coup d’état in 1335 to dethrone Toqon Temür and enthrone Huanghuo Temür, a

⁷⁰ *Yuanshi*, juan 38, p.816.

⁷¹ The Censorial Inspector Tai Buhua admonished against the creation of this title, which offended the Empress Dowager and she almost decided to have him put to death. But later this title became one of her crimes when Toqon Temür removed her from the palace, “Budashili was my aunt, but she allied herself with treacherous court officials. She did not understand my feelings and overstepped herself in arrogating herself to the title of Great Empress Dowager.” *Yuanshi*, juan 40, p. 857.

⁷² *Yuanshi*, juan 138, pp. 3326-34.

descendant of Möngke Khan. Their plot was discovered by Boyan,⁷³ who took this opportunity and completely destroyed the force of his opponents. Tang Qishi and his younger brother were executed. Empress Danashili was also poisoned by Boyan in the seventh month of 1335.

No evidence indicates that Empress Danashili was aware of the coup d'état plotted by her brothers, and she was, to a great extent, a victim of the political struggles in the late Yuan period. What she did was to hide her younger brother Talahai in her palace after the coup d'état became abortive. Toqon Temür was so coldhearted that he refused to save his wife's life. When Danashili was arrested by Boyan, she turned to Toqon Temür for help, "The Empress shouted to the Emperor, 'Please save me, Your Majesty!' But the Emperor said, 'your brothers have conspired to rebel against me. How can I save you?'"⁷⁴ She was probably less than twenty years old when she died. In the same month of her death, her spiritual tablet was set up in the imperial temple.⁷⁵

Although Danashili might not be interested in politics, she was criticized for using her power to bully the weak and to be greedy. She was very jealous and often beat and insulted the Korean woman, Lady Qi, who was favored by Shundi.⁷⁶ She issued a decree ordering the eunuch Boluotiemur to sell 100,000 *yin*⁷⁷ of salt and hand in the income to the Household Service for the Empress (*Zhong Zheng Yuan*).⁷⁸ The government even assigned two special ships to do her business.⁷⁹

Toqon Temür's political skills manifested themselves when he was determined to destroy the rapidly growing power of Boyan. After the extermination of Yantienur's entire family, he appointed Boyan as the sole chancellor and granted him all kinds of honorable titles composed of 246 characters. He also chose to maintain a low political profile to differentiate himself from Boyan. Boyan was the Commander-in-Chief of the imperial bodyguards. But when Toqon Temür went on a journey, he only had a few

⁷³ *Ibid*, juan 138, pp. 3326-34. Tu Ji claimed that this coup d'état probably never happened. It was Boyan's excuse to eliminate his opponents. See *Mengwuer shiji*, juan 16:4.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, juan 138, p.3334.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, juan 38, p. 827.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, juan 114, p. 2880.

⁷⁷ *Yin* was a special term for calculating the weight of salt. One *yin* was equal to 200 kilograms in the Yuan dynasty.

⁷⁸ An enormous establishment with its own military and revenue-collecting agencies, head by a Commissioner (*yuan shi*) who must normally have been a Mongol noble; rank not specified.

⁷⁹ *Yuanshi*, juan 38, pp. 822-24.

bodyguards. This is so because most of them went to protect Boyan.⁸⁰ Boyan killed or banished several Princes without the Emperor's authorization. All these perverse acts soon became Boyan's crimes, and by relying on intimate bodyguards Toqon Temür finally exiled Boyan in 1340 and seized all his authority in the central government.

Now it's time for Toqon Temür to revenge his father. In 1340, he issued an imperial decree to make public the charge that Tuq Temür had murdered his father:

He (Tuq Temür) pretended to abdicate and gave [to my father] the imperial seal. My father dealt with him in good faith and did not suspect his motives. He presented him with the seal of Crown Prince. However, Tuq Temür was steeped in evil and refused to repent. [Even] when he met my father, he was engaged in conspiratorial activities with his ministers Yuelubuhua, Yeliya, and Minglidong'e. Therefore my father died with a grievance in his heart.⁸¹

The edict goes on to say that he himself had been the victim of Tuq Temür's plotting:

He selfishly intended to pass the throne to his own son. Therefore he fabricated lies and visited misfortune onto Empress Babusha⁸². He claimed that I was not the son of Mingzong and thus banished me to a far-off place.⁸³

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, *juan* 138, pp. 3335-39.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, *juan* 40, p. 856.

⁸² Mingzong's wife (–1330), the mother of Irinjabal (Ningzong).

⁸³ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 40, p. 856. There had been a rumor since the late Yuan that Toqon Temür was the descendant of the Song. It was initiated by Quan Heng in *Geng Shen Wai Shi* (in *Yuandai Biji Xiaoshuo*, vol. 3, in *Lidai Biji Xiaoshuo Jicheng*, Vol. 30. Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1994, p. 519): "In the beginning of the state, when the south of the Yangzi River of the Song was conquered, the Duke of the State of Ying (*Yingguo Gong*) was a young [Song] Emperor. He came to the capital of Yuan, and volunteered to become a monk in the White-Tower Temple (*Baita Si*). Soon after, he received a decree ordering him to move to a mountain temple in Gan Zhou (present Gansu province). The Prince of the State of Zhao visited the temple. He sympathized with the duke's old age and loneliness. Therefore, he left a woman of the Muslim (Hui) with him. In the seventh year of Yanyou era (1320), the woman was pregnant. At the sixteenth day of the fourth month the woman gave birth to a boy. It just so happened that Mingzong came from the north. When he was traveling in the early morning, he saw five-color vital energy (*qi*) forming dragon veins over the temple. He wanted to obtain it. [This temple] turned out to be the place where the Duke of the State of Ying lived. Then (Mingzong) asked, 'Are there any important treasures in your chamber?' [The duke] answered, 'This morning after the fifth-watches my wife bore a boy. That is all.' Mingzong was extremely excited. He adopted the boy and took his mother together with him." For centuries many Chinese scholars believed this anecdote, but more scholars claimed that it was probably only

He concluded the edict by ordering the spirit tablet of Tuq Temür be removed from the imperial temple.

Shortly after that, Tuq Temür's Empress Budashili was exiled to Dong'an Zhou and executed. Tuq Temür's only son Yantiegusi, the then Crown Prince was banished to Korea, and as he made his way there, he was too murdered.

From 1341 to 1353 Toqon Temür had been acting as a very enterprising young Emperor and exerted himself to seek an effective remedy for the declining dynasty. He elected capable personnel to the important government positions and launched a series of political, social, and cultural reforms, including restoring imperial examination to elect talented scholars, promoting Confucianism and education; making laws; and checking and assessing government officials, etc. Although his reforms achieved some good results in a few provinces, because of the extensive corruption of officials his plans finally failed. He became so down-hearted that starting from 1353 he suddenly lost interest in governmental affairs and turned to Lamanism, and at the same time, he became pleasure-seeking and quickly corrupted. The declining of the Mongol Yuan dynasty became inevitable and irremediable. However, Toqon Temür's reign lasted for 36 year (1333-68), which was more than one third of the whole Mongol dynasty in China (1279-68). To better understand the late Yuan politics, we must discuss an important and controversial Korean woman, Lady Qi Wanzhehudu, who played a critical role in the political affairs of the late Yuan period.

Her biography in the *Yuanshi* tells us:

Empress Wanzhehudu, Lady Qi (Qishi), who was a Korean, gave birth to the Crown Prince Aiyoushilidala. Her family was of very low origin. After she became the Empress, they became rich and powerful. Three generations of her family were conferred posthumously the titles of Princes. Initially, she was brought in by the servant Tumandier of the Huizheng Yuan. As a maid in the palace, she was mainly responsible for serving Shundi tea. She was very clever and crafty, and was

fabrication created by adherents of the Song dynasty to give vent to their pent-up anger. The story gained great currency in the Ming because of the widespread hatred of the Mongol Yuan. One piece of counter-evidence is that, although Tuq Temür announced that Toqon Temür was not Khoshila's son, he did not state that he was the son of the Emperor of the perished Song. A more convincing piece of evidence is that when Tuq Temür was dying, he regretted murdering his brother, Khoshila, and in his will he stated that Toqon Temür should be put on the throne so that he could see Khoshila in the Yellow Springs and without acknowledging guilt for his betrayal. If Tuq Temü was certain that Togon Temür was not the son of Khoshila and was indeed the son of the Song Emperor, he should have definitely asked his empress and Yantiemur to put Irinjibal, the second son of Khoshila, on the throne instead of Toqon Temür.

gradually favored by Shundi. Later Empress Danashili was jealous of her, and often flogged her with a whip and insulted her. When Empress Danashili was murdered, the Emperor intended to designate her as his Empress. But the chancellor Boyan pleaded with the Emperor not to do so. After Boyan was dismissed from the chancellor's office, Shalaban suggested the Emperor to designate her as the Secondary Empress. She was settled in the Xingsheng Palace, and the Huizheng Yuan was renamed as Zizheng Yuan.⁸⁴

Toqon Temür was banished to Korea when he was very young, and this special experience might have contributed to his falling in love with a Korean girl who was from a common family. It is not clear when Lady Qi came to the Yuan court. But it is certain that this happened before 1335 when Empress Danashili was murdered by Boyan. And she had become Shundi's favorite concubine between 1333 and 1335.

After his first wife died, Toqon Temür did not take an Empress for two years. In 1337, he married Boyanhudu, a fourteen-year-old girl from the Onggirat clan. She later gave birth to a boy, who died at age of two. The *Yuanshi* states that she was virtuous because she once refused Shundi's request to visit and sleep with her, with an excuse "night time it is an inappropriate time for you, the most revered and respected to come."⁸⁵ But this conservative virtue obviously did not attract Shundi, who always sought new pleasures all his life. We can safely say that the relationship of husband and wife must have been insipid, since although she occupied the position of the First Empress for more than thirty years, she almost did not exert any influence on the Yuan politics.

In 1340, after having successfully exiled Boyan Toqon, Temür promoted Lady Qi to the position of Secondary Empress. In the same year she gave a boy named Ayoushilidala who was later designated as the Crown Prince.

Her name was changed to Wanzhehudu, a typical Mongolian female name, probably as soon as she entered Shundi's chamber, and in 1365, when she became Shundi's Principal Empress, her surname was also changed to Sulianghe.⁸⁶

Toqon Temür did not face protests when he decided to take Lady Qi as his concubine and even later as his Secondary Empress. However, when he attempted to promote her to the position of Principal in 1365, he faced a storm of criticism from his ministers. The Censorial Inspector Li Mi said,

Shizu (Khubilai) swore never to work together with Korea. Since you have ascended the throne of Shizu, how could you forget his words, and allow the Korean woman,

⁸⁴ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 114, p. 2880.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, *juan* 114, p. 2879.

⁸⁶ "Sulianghe" or "Solongyut" meant Korea in Mongolian language.

Lady Qi, to occupy the position of Empress? Nowadays disasters and strange phenomena occur frequently. Dams are breached and earthquakes explode. Thieves and bandits run rampant. All these phenomena show that *yin* [female] elements are flourishing, and *yang* [masculine] elements are declining. I beg you to reduce this woman to the rank of imperial concubine. [If you do so], soon the three stars will become stable in their positions and disasters and strange things will disappear.⁸⁷

Toqon Temür, however, refused this suggestion.

Lady Qi was fully aware of her unpopularity in the court, and took great trouble to display both her virtue and the other qualities which would reduce the opposition to her becoming Empress.

In her spare time, the Empress read the Classics of Female Filial Piety (*Nü Xiao Jing*) and historical books, trying to find out about those virtuous Empresses of the past dynasties, so as to take them as models. When there were rare delicacies in the tributes from other states, she would first send somebody to present them to the ancestral temple, only then would she eat them. In the eighteenth year of the *Zhizheng* era (1358), a severe famine occurred in the capital. The Empress ordered the officers to cook porridge to feed the starving victims. She donated her own gold, silver, millet, and cloth, and ordered Piaobuhua, the commissioner of the *Zizheng* Yuan, to buy graveyards at the eleven gates of the capital and bury more than one hundred thousand bodies.⁸⁸

Shundi seems to have been ambitious, practical and far-sighted in the early part of his reign. He recognized that the Mongol Empire was disintegrating and that to preserve Mongol rule in China, accommodations were necessary. The Chinese were becoming restive under Mongol rule, especially in the south, and his attempts to implement Confucian principles of rule were viewed with so much suspicion, and outright opposition that during the 1340's, he abandoned his attempts at good governance, embraced Tibetan Lamaism (Bon) and began to give himself up to various forms of debauchery and his "hobby" of carpentry. He is said even designed a "dragon boat" of 40 meters in length and about 6.6 meters in width.⁸⁹

The degeneration of Toqon Temür worried Lady Qi very much, and she tried to persuade Shundi not to pass his days only in sensual pleasure, "The concubines in the palace are enough to serve you. You do not need to be obsessed by the "heavenly demon-dancing girls" (*tian mo wu nü*) all day

⁸⁷ *Yuanshi*, juan 41, p. 883. The ancient Chinese were inclined to associate natural phenomena with human activities. Many strange astronomical phenomena and social disorders, which are recorded in Shundi's basic annals in the *Yuanshi*, occurred during this period. And the ministers conveniently attributed all these disasters to one particular woman.

⁸⁸ *Yuanshi*, juan 114, p. 2880.

⁸⁹ Bi Yuan, *Xu zizhi tongjian*, *Yuan ji* 32, *Shundi*, the eighteenth year of the *Zhizheng* era.

long. You should treasure your health!”⁹⁰ But her admonishment only made Toqon Temür angry, who said to her, “From ancient times until the present, it is I [the Emperor] who is the unique one.” And he refused to sleep with her for two months.⁹¹

Lady Qi came to believe that the Emperor’s degradation was incorrigible, thus in 1358 she decided to force him to abdicate and hand over the throne to her son, Ayoushilidala, who had been designated the Crown Prince in 1353. This incidence, however, shows that female power had grown to the extent that a wife could even contemplate deporting her husband, an Emperor! She first sent Piaobuhua, a Korean eunuch in her palace, to reveal her scheme to the chancellor Taiping, but Taiping refused to cooperate. Then she invited Taiping to her palace and treated him with a banquet, but she was still not successful. Therefore in 1360 she and the Crown Prince forced Taiping to resign. And in 1363 Taiping was exiled to Tibet, and in the midway he was forced to commit suicide.⁹²

Chinese historians tend to be critical of Lady Qi’s interference in politics during the late Yuan period. But I find this criticism unjustified, nothing more than that the generalized hatred of Confucian historians for female interference in government. Her intention to force Shundi to abdicate was probably undertaken to preserve the dynasty. At that time Zhu Yuanzhang’s Red-kerchief revolt was destroying the foundations of the Mongol Empire, but Shundi ignored the threat and the power of the Yuan continued to weaken.

The Empress had other sources of conflict with her husband aside from his debauchery and neglect of state affairs. One of these concerned the education of her son, the Crown Prince for whom she derived a Confucian education. Tao Zongyi records the following story in *Chuo Geng Lu*.

The present Emperor employed a teacher for the Crown Prince and erected the *Duan Ben* Hall for teaching and studying. One day, the Emperor’s tutor teacher unexpectedly came to talk to the mother of the Crown Prince, saying, “Previously the Crown Prince studied the Buddha dharma and felt very enlightened. Now you let him study Confucian principles. I am afraid it will disturb his true nature.” The Empress said, “Although I live deep in the palace and do not entirely understand the moral principles, I have heard that from the ancient times until now, Confucian principles must be employed by the rulers who govern the country. To give this up and resort to other [teachings] would be heretical. Although the Buddha dharma is good, it can only be the minor thing, and cannot be used to govern the state. How

⁹⁰ Xu Qianxue, *Zi zhi tong jian, houbian*, juan 178. In *Si Ku Quanshu*, 342-345 ce, *shi bu* 100-103, electronic version.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Yuanshi*, juan 140. pp. 3370-71.

can you fail to let the Crown Prince read [Confucian] books?" The Emperor's teacher returned filled with embarrassment.⁹³

It seems clear from this evidence that although her husband had no interest in Confucian precepts of rule, the Empress was an independent thinker and possesses a genuine loyalty to dynastic preservation. Throughout the late 1350's and early 1360's, her political involvement grew in spite of mounting criticism of her role; and with it, the anxiety she must have felt as she, like her female predecessors, struggled against a fiercely patriarchal system. Daji, Babuhan, and Budashili were the most recent victims of the system, and it was not long before Lady Qi faced a threat which could end her career and her life.

In 1364, a powerful general called Boluotiemur rebelled and led troops to assault the capital. The Crown Prince fled to Taiyuan in northwest China, and even raised an army to suppress the rebellion. Boluotiemur instigated the Censorial Inspector, Wu Qizong, to bring charge against the Empress of interfering in state affairs. In the third month of 1365, Boluotiemur forged an imperial edict calling for the arrest of the Empress, who was removed from the palace and imprisoned for one hundred days.⁹⁴ The fact that she was not executed would suggest she maintained a degree of power and popularity, and she also bribed Boluotiemur with several beautiful Korean girls for her release. After Boluotiemur was suddenly executed by Shundi the Crown Prince was recalled to the capital, she acted swiftly. "The Empress dispatched an imperial edict to Kuokuotiemur, ordering him to send troops to accompany the Crown Prince. Her plan was to force the Emperor to abdicate in favour of the Crown Prince."⁹⁵ But the plan failed when Kuokuotiemur withdrew his support and he returned his troops to their camps while they were still thirty miles from the capital.⁹⁶

It must be pointed out that at this time Lady Qi's anxiety to enthrone her son was mainly to revenge her family in Korea that had been entirely exterminated in 1356 because they took advantage of Lady Qi's power and plotted a rebellion against the Korean king.⁹⁷ Since then revenge had become the most important matter in her life, which brought great damage to the Yuan dynasty. And the only person she could rely on was her son, the Crown Prince. In 1362, Lady Qi urged the Crown Prince to avenge her by attacking

⁹³ *Nancun chuo geng lu*, Tao Zongyi, Zhonghua Shuju, 1959, *juan* 2, p. 21.

⁹⁴ *Yuanshi*, *juan* 114, p. 2881.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Ch'ong In-ji, *Koryŏsa*. Sŏul Tŭkpyŏlsi : Asea Munhwasa, 1972. v. 39, p. 771; v. 131, p. 845-6.

Korea, and they designated a man of the Korean royal family in the Yuan capital as Korean king, a man from the Lady Qi's clan named Sanbaonu as Crown Prince (*wǒngja*), and a man from the Department of Military Affairs named Cuitiemur as Korean chancellor.⁹⁸ This arrangement indicates that in her scheme Qi's family would eventually take the Korean throne. They dispatched an army of ten thousand soldiers, together with some recruited Japanese soldiers, which seems inadequate to launch a large-scale invasion. When their troops just crossed the Yalu River, they fell into the ambush of Korean army and suffered a crushing defeat, with only seventeen cavalries escaping.⁹⁹ Although lady Qi was very ashamed by this failure, she never gave up.

In 1368 some government officials urged Shundi to restrict her power and interference in politics, but obviously they failed. Even in 1369 when they had fled to Mongolia, she still requested the Crown Prince to order the Right-Chancellor of the Liaoyang Province, Nahachu, to attack Korea.¹⁰⁰ This was almost impossible since the Crown Prince had become the Commander-in-chief of Yuan army to resist the attacks of the Ming troops, and he must not divert his attention and disperse his troops at this critical time. Therefore he declined Lady Qi's request. Specific information about her final fate is not available. However, according to the Ming history, in 1370 Ming troops attacked Yingchang and captured Shundi's Empresses, concubines, and grandson, official seals and documents. The Crown Prince barely escaped.¹⁰¹ Lady Qi must have been captured at that time.

Limitations to the Political Involvement of the Mongol Empresses

Generally speaking, any successful political involvement of Mongol Empresses depended on support both from Chinese and Mongol government officials, and Mongol nobles. This support, however, was fluctuated and was notoriously unavailable. For instance, in Töregene's regency, she found herself reversing a number of decisions on the advice of Yelü Chucai, and was unable to persuade her own son Köten to support her decision to extradite the ministers who came to him seeking refuge from the political

⁹⁸ *Yuanshi*, juan 46, p. 962.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, juan 114, p. 2881

¹⁰⁰ Liu Ji, *Bei xun si ji*, quoted in Cao Yongnian, "Beixun siji suo jian zhi Bei Yuan zhengju", *NeiMenggu daxue xuebao*, no. 1, 2001.

¹⁰¹ Xu Hong, *Ming ming chen wan yan lu*, juan 2, in *Si ku quan shu. Shi bu*.

persecution of Töregene.¹⁰² Empress Bulughan had numerous supporters, both Mongol and Chinese, but in the end she was defeated in a coup d'état, partly because the chancellor Hala-hasun opposed her. Empress Qi's political involvement was subject to constant opposition, suggesting that the legitimization of female political power became more and more fragile as the dynasty progressed and Confucian strict was against "hens crowing in the morning gained ground".

To whom, then, did the Empress-dowagers and Empresses resort to practise their power and to exert their political influence? In general, the most reliable allies were their sons, male relatives, and servants, such as eunuchs, who played an important role in late Yuan politics. For example, one of Töregene's trusted followers, Fātima Khatun, was initially a prisoner of war, became a palace slave, and eventually became very powerful during Töregene's regency. As Juvaini puts it:

It so chanced that she came to Qara-Qorun, where she was a procuress in the market; and in the arts of shrewdness and cunning the wily Delilah could have been her pupil. During the reign of Qa'an she had constant access to the *ordu* of Töregene Khatun; and when times changed and Chinqai withdrew from the scene, she enjoyed even greater favor, and her influence became paramount; so that she became the sharer of intimate confidences and the depository of hidden secrets, and she was free to issue commands and prohibitions.¹⁰³

The Empress-dowager Daji relied on a carefully-chosen coterie of followers to execute her commands, "inside her palace she trusted Hei Lü's mother Yilie-shiba. Outside the palace, her favorites Shiliemun, Niulin, and the then-chancellor Tiemudier acted in collusion with each other. They went so far as to insult and beat the director of political affairs, Zhang Gui, stopping at nothing, fouling and confusing court affairs."¹⁰⁴ Empress Buda-shili had incited the eunuch Baizhu to murder Empress Babusha of Mingzong, while the Korean eunuch Piao Buhua actually acted in court as the representative of the Empress Qi of Shundi, perhaps because they came from the same hometown. He had been introduced to court as the servant of Empress Qi, was promoted to the rank of Great Officer in Eminent Dignity (*Rong Lu Dafu*), ambassador of the Zizheng Yuan, and Director of Financial Affairs of the Empress. We are told also, that he collaborated with the Chancellor of Right, Shuosijian to deceive Shundi. "They hid remonstrances from every quarter as well as reports about the merits of the generals and

¹⁰² *World Conqueror*, Vol. II, pp. 241-42.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 244-45.

¹⁰⁴ *YS* 116:2902. See the biography of Daji.

ministers, and did not let Shundi become aware of them. ...They were so powerful that nine out of ten officials ingratiated themselves with them.”¹⁰⁵

Compared to other dynasties in Chinese history, the political involvement of the Yuan Empresses is probably unprecedented. Female political involvement in imperial China was constantly criticized as “a hen acting as a cock to crow in the morning” (*pinji si chen*)¹⁰⁶ and was rigidly restricted. Although Imperial Consorts were honored, they remained as dependants, with their functions limited to reproduction and entertainment. In the Yuan dynasty, Empresses were active politically in almost every reign, a phenomenon which probably reflected women’s higher position in ancient Mongol society. This was, firstly, a result of their important economic role, one mentioned by Jean de Plan Carpin, William of Rubruk, and Marco Polo, among others, “All women had power in their families. Many of them even shoot arrows as men.”¹⁰⁷ as studies such as those by Rossabi have shown, the political involvement of Empresses was basically constructive in the early Yuan period, but after the middle Yuan, Empresses or Empress-dowagers gradually came to control the Emperors and the government. This led to internal struggles in the ruling house, which greatly wore down the strength of the Mongol empire and facilitated the decline of the Yuan dynasty.

In typical Chinese dynasties, political involvement of Empresses was usually supported by their powerful families (*waiqi*), who took advantage of their daughters to increase their own power in governmental affairs so that “disasters caused by *waiqi*” had been a problem much-discussed by traditional Confucian historians. In the Yuan, however, although the Empresses were very active, their families were rarely involved in the internal political struggles of the ruling house, and throughout the period, a number of measures limited the *wanqi* access to central power. One example is that of the Empress-dowager Kōkejin, who refused her younger brother’s request for a government position,¹⁰⁸ and this became standard practice.

Female interference in state affairs has been universally criticized and even condemned by Chinese historians from the time of China’s first history, the *Shiji*, in which Sima Qian excoriated China’s first real Empress Dowager Lü. “The involvement of women in politics was the source of confusion.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ YS 204: 4552. See the biography of Piaobuhua.

¹⁰⁶ *Shangshu*—“*Mu shi*”, in *Si ku quan shu*.

¹⁰⁷ Jean de Plan Carpin, *Bolang Jiabin Menggu xing ji*, tr. Geng Sheng, He Gaoji, Zhonghua Shuju, (1985): 44.

¹⁰⁸ YS 116: 2899.

¹⁰⁹ *Sanguo zhi*, *juan 2*, “Weishu-Wendi Ji”. Quoted in Bo Hua, *Tianzi, digong, zhengdao*, Guangxi Jiaoyu Chubanshe, (1996): 172.

“Since the ancient times the reason why the country was in disorder was that the Emperors were too young and Empress Dowagers were too powerful...don’t you know the story of Empress Lü?”¹¹⁰ In their writings, the decline and destruction of almost all dynasties had something to do with the “disasters caused by women” (*nühuo*). This patriarchal prejudice exaggerated the deleterious effort of female beauty which led the stereotypical “last bad Emperors” into dissolute ways and their neglect of the duties attendant upon proper stewardship of the state.

Since the very beginning of Chinese history, and even prior to the establishment of empire in 221 B.C., the destruction of the three earliest Chinese dynasties, Xia, Shang, and Zhou, were claimed to be caused by women. The last Emperor of what is usually regarded as the legendary Xia, “Jie abandoned etiquette and ethics, and had sex with women. He collected many beautiful women in his harem, and gathered courtesans, dwarfs, and close servants who could play amusing games. He created decadent music, and day and night he drank together with Meixi and other palace women and never stopped. He put Meixi on his knee, and listened to her words.”¹¹¹ The last Emperor of the Yin-Shang dynasty, Zhou Wang “loved wine, sex, and pleasure, and favored women. He loved Daji, and always complied with her words.”¹¹² King You of the Zhou dynasty favored Baosi: “Baosi did not like to laugh. King You wanted her to laugh, but she did not laugh, so he banged the great drum and lighted the beacon-fires that were only used when foreign enemies invaded. All the lords flocked (to defend the Emperor), but there were no enemies, Baosi then laughed loudly.”¹¹³ To amuse Baosi, the king frequently ordered false alarms, and when the real invasion came, the lords failed to respond, and the Eastern Zhou dynasty fell.

The last Emperor of the Yuan dynasty at least in official historiography, is said to have shared all these characteristics of licentiousness. When he was tired of government duties and sought sensual pleasures in 1340’s, his chief bodyguard, Hama, immediately recommended an Tibetan monk to teach him the practices of “great pleasure” (*da xile* or *yan dier fa*).¹¹⁴ The monk boasted that if one learned these practices, one could have intercourse with ten women in a night, and absorb the feminine essence to nurture the masculine. Following the monk’s instruction, Shundi ordered a tantric temple built for

¹¹⁰ Sima Qian, *Shiji*, *juan* 49.

¹¹¹ Liu Xiang [Han]: *Lie nü zhuan*, *juan* 7, “Xia Jie Meixi.” In *Si Ku Quan Shu*.

¹¹² Op-cit. “Yin Zhou Daji.”

¹¹³ Op-cit., “Zhou You Baosi.”

¹¹⁴ A method of directing one’s strength, through concentration, to a chosen part of the body. This “great pleasure” directed the strength to the sexual organ.

the “happy Buddha” in which all the Buddha figures posed in all kinds of positions of sexual intercourse. He then selected some beautiful women from his harem in order to practise these methods in this temple.¹¹⁵ Later, Hama’s sister-in-law, Tulu-tiemur, recommended another Tibetan monk named Jialinzhen, to teach Shundi another sexual method called “men and women practice great pleasure together”(nan nü shuangxiu fa). Shundi knew that his principal Empress might refuse to learn this method because she rigidly adhered to etiquette, and that it would take time for the other concubines to change their minds. Therefore he ordered thirty beautiful girls selected from families of commons, and ten men selected from his relatives who were called “yina,”¹¹⁶ to engage in the sexual technique together. Moreover, the “yina” of Shundi used Korean women as agents to search for beautiful women among the commoners or even noble families, and introduce them into the palace. These women would be forced in the palace for several days,¹¹⁷ and in 1354, they trained sixteen beautiful girls who formed a dancing troupe, called “heavenly demon dancing girls” (*tian mo wunü*). Shundi was fascinated by these girls and whenever a dancing girl attracted him he would take her to a chamber in order to have sexual intercourse. There was a secret room called “anything goes (*shishi wua*) where Shundi often had intercourse with the dancing girls, together with other officials.”¹¹⁸

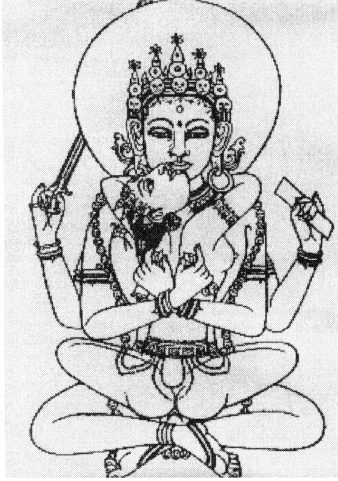
According to a rule of the Yuan dynasty, an Emperor should not stay in one *ordo* for more than five days, and in order to visit the dancing girls more often, Shundi ordered a tunnel built connecting his room and the place where the dancing girls were situated, so that he could avoid the criticism of the ministers. Historians who later commented on this behavior found it difficult to find a parallel even among the most dissolute of Chinese Emperors.

¹¹⁵ Li Yanjie, Wang Fuchun, *Zhongguo diwang houfei waizhuan, Yuandai juan*, Jilin Wen Shi Chubanshe. (1994): 260-62.

¹¹⁶ *Yina*, companion.

¹¹⁷ Ren Chongyue, *Gengshen waishi jianzheng*, Zhongzhou Guji Chubanshe, (1991): 71.

¹¹⁸ YS 205: 4583. See the biography of Hama. Li Yanjie, Wang Fuchun, *Zhongguo diwang houfei waizhuan, Yuandai juan*, Jilin Wen Shi Chubanshe. (1994): 263-64.



7. Happy Buddha



8. Heavenly Demon Dancing Girls¹¹⁹

The founder of the Ming dynasty drew a lesson from the lascivious practices in the later Yuan and enacted decrees strictly prohibiting Empresses from contacting outsiders.

In view of the failure of the former dynasty and the fact that in the later Yuan, the wives and concubines [of the Emperor] and other women in the palace committed adultery with outside ministers, or allowed monks to stay in the palace to be initiated into nunhood, and the wives of ministers also came and left the prohibited palace, and made the palace full of obscenity, the Emperor (Hongwu) issued a decree: An Empress could be in charge only of the business of the Imperial Consorts and other women in the palace. She was not allowed to be involved in things outside the palace.¹²⁰

The Ming founder even attributed the extinction of the Yuan dynasty to the obscenities practiced in the palace at the end of the Yuan.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ The Dunhuang murals. Cave no. 465.

<http://cn.chiculture.net/0507/html/0507c09/0507c09.htm> (Jan. 9 2008)

¹²⁰ *Mingchao Jishi Benmo*, juan 14. quoted in Ren Chongyue, *Gengshen Waishi Jianzheng*, p. 71.

¹²¹ Diangu Ji Wen, juan 2, quoted in Ren Chongyue, *Gengshen waishi jianzheng*, p. 72.

CHAPTER SIX

“Two-way” Marriages: Marriages between the Mongolian Royal Family and Dei-sechan’s Clan of the Onggirat Tribe

Historical Background

The Mongolian tribes in the thirteenth-century could generally be divided into two different categories in terms of their socio-economic patterns. One of them was the nomadic category to which belonged the Mongol, Tartar, Merkit, Kereit, and Naiman. They were herders. The other category was called by the Mongols, the “people of the forest” (*lin zhong baixing*). They lived in the more-forested areas of the steppes and led a life of hunting and fishing.¹ The Onggirat tribe was a nomadic tribe which had settled in districts from the lower reaches of the Kerulen River to the Argun River. To its west was Chinggis’s Kiyan tribe, a sub-tribe of Mongol; its southeast bordered on the Great Wall of the Jin; and its southwest was contiguous to the Tartar tribe.²

¹ For a detailed account of the two different economic patterns, see B. Y. Wladimirtzov, *Menggu shehui zhidu shi*, tr., Zhang Xingtang, Wu Zhankun, Zhonghua Wenhua Chubanshiye Weiyuanhui, (1957): 1-7.

² Ye Xinmin “Hongjilabu de fengjian lingdi zhidu”, *Menggushi Lunwen Xuanji*, Huhehaoteshi Menggu Yuwen Lishi Xuehui, 1 (1983): 220.



9. The Locations of the Mongol Tribes in the 12th-13th Centuries³

According to Rashid Al-din, all the Mongol people were divided into two sub-tribes. One was the Darlakin Mongol tribe and the other was the Niru'un Mongol tribe. The Darlakin Mongol referred to the commonality of the Mongol people, while the Niru'un were particular group comprised of the descendants of Alan Quo'a.⁴ The Onggirat tribe belonged to the Darlakin tribe and Chinggis' Kiyan tribe belonged to the Niru'un tribe.

The Onggirat and the Kiyan tribes had been related by marriage for many generations prior to Chinggis (Temüjin) Khan. According to Rashid al-din, these two tribes had had a marriage relationship earlier than Yesügei. Chinggis Khan's great-grandmother, the wife of Qobule Khan, was a woman of the Onggirat tribe, who gave birth to six sons. Chinggis Khan's mother was abducted by Yesügei from the Merkit tribe. When Yesügei took Temüjin to his maternal grandfather's tribe to make an offer of marriage, they were met by Dei Sechen, a nobleman of the Onggirat tribe, who said to Yesügei:

We Unggirad people from days of old,
Having [for us] the comeliness
Of the daughters of [our] daughters,
And the beauty
Of [our] daughters,
Have not been disputing enemies.

³ Mongol tribes, <http://www.paulnoll.com/China/Dynasty/dynasty-Mongol.htm> (Jan. 9, 2008)

⁴ Rashid Al-din, Jāmi 'al-Tawārīkh (*Shiji*), tr. Yu Dajun, Zhou Jianqi, Shanwu Yinshuguan, 1997, vol.1a: 152.

For those of you which are become *qahan*,
We make [our] daughters comely of cheek
To ride in a *Qasaγ* cart
And, making [one] to harness a black he camel [to it],
Making him to trot, we go [unto the *qahan*]
And make [them] to sit together [with the *qahan*]
On the *qatun* throne.⁵

The Onggirat people had helped Chinggis Khan greatly in unifying the Mongol steppes and in the founding of the Great Mongol Empire. During the warfare which resulted in the conquest of the Jin, the Onggirat tribe was one of the “five *touxia*,”⁶ together with the Ikireş, Wuluwut, Mangwut, and Jalair. In the early stages of the *Yeke-Mongol ulus* (Great Mongol State) the Onggirat people were an important force that Chinggis Khan relied upon.

According to D’Ohsson’s *Mongol History*, there were five sub-tribes under the Onggirat tribe. They were the Councrates, Ikireş Oulcounoutes (Olqunu’ud, Caranoutes, and the COUNKOUlioutēs⁷ Chinggis Khan’s father-in-law Dei Sechen belonged to the Oulcounoutes tribe, but later, Dei Sechen’s posterity formed a tribe called the Bosihur-Onggirat.

However, it should be noted that although the Mongol and Onggirat tribes called each other *huda* (relatives by marriage), the marriage relationship did not guarantee the cooperation between these two tribes, and

⁵ *The Secret History*, pp. 15-6. YCMS, P. 22. We know from the words of Dei Sechen that Onggirat tribe and the Mongol Kiyān tribe had a longer history of intermarriage. In a note under Yesügei’s abducting Hö’elün, Daorun Tibu points out that the Onggirat tribe had an intermarriage relationship with the Mongol tribe for many generations before Yesügei. It may explain why Yesügei abducted Hö’elün. He argues that Yesügei probably did not like Olqunu’ud-Onggirat tribe to establish a new marriage relationship with another tribe. (See Daorun Tibu, *Xinyi jianzhu Menggu mish*, P. 26, Vol. 1, Sanlian Shidian Xianggang Fendian, (1980)). The problem is how Yesügei knew that Hö’elün was an Onggirat woman when he first saw her on the road. It might have been a coincidence because Yesügei was initially attracted by the beauty of Hö’elün. (Rashid Al-din, Jāmi‘ al-Tawārīkh, tr. Yu Dajun, Zhou Jianqi, *Shiji*, vol. 1b: 50)

⁶ *Touxia* was one of the several terms for land grants (often rendered appendages) conferred on members of the nobility; the recipient of large tracts were virtually autonomously fief-holders who nominated men for official appointments in their domains, collected taxes, and exercised other governmental powers until c. 1311, when the central government began exerting its direct control in all areas and nobles were given stipends in lieu of incomes derived from their tracts.

⁷ D’Ohsson, Constantin d’, baron, *Historie des Mongols, Duosang Menggushi*, (tr.) Feng Chengjun, Taiwan: Shangwu Yinshuguan, vo. 1, (1963): 171-2.

for a long time, most members of the Onggirat tribe were antagonistic to Chinggis Khan in his unifying wars in the northern steppes, since Chinggis' action had threatened their interest and existence. "They were all afraid of the power (of Chinggis Khan) and felt restless. Therefore they gathered at Aleiquan...and were going to attack the Emperor (Chinggis Khan)." The Onggirat tribe submitted to Jamuga's (Zhamuhe) tribe, and together with several other tribes, met at the Jian River...and drove soldiers to invade and harass."⁸

Chinggis Khan's tribe had also often plundered the Onggirat tribe. "The Onggirat came to surrender, but Hasar did not understand their intention and plundered them."⁹ Therefore the Onggirat went to surrender to Jamuga.¹⁰ In 1201, Qarkeh-aml (Dierge-ke'emiele), the chief of the Onggirat tribe, met with the chiefs of the Qtqin (Hedajin) and Saljiut (Sale-zhiwuti) tribes at the Jian River, electing Jamuga as their Khan, and jointly assaulting Chinggis Khan and Ong-Khan, but they were defeated.¹¹ In this campaign, a part of the Onggirat people formally surrendered to Chinggis Khan.¹²

In 1203, when Chinggis was defeated by Ong-Khan and afterwards, marched along the Qalqa River (Helehe), with the intention of sending a troop to conquer the Onggirat people, he said,

If they say [unto themselves], "The Unnirad people from days of old [have had their
being not by the might of arms, but]
By the comeliness
Of the daughters of [their] daughters,
By the beauty
Of [their] daughters,"
They should submit themselves.
If they say, "Revolt!" we shall fight.¹³

This group of the Onggirat people then surrendered to Chinggis. Later, Chinggis Khan conquered another sub-tribe of the Onggirat tribe—the Nierjin, and after that, all the sub-tribes of the Onggirat tribe surrendered to him. In 1203, Chinggis Manu fact used an excuse to attack and and kill

⁸ YS 1:7. See the basic annals of Taizu.

⁹ YS 1:8. Hasar was the younger brother of Chinggis Khan.

¹⁰ Jamuga was once a sworn brother of Chinggis and later became his enemy.

¹¹ Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi' al-Tawarikh (Shiji)*, vol. 1b:158.

¹² YS 1:8. *MGMS*, pp. 141-143; *Shiji*, Vol. 1: 119-120, *Qin zheng lu*, pp. 23-24.

¹³ *YCMS*, pp. 96-97, annotated by Chen Binhe, 1933. *The Secret History*, ch. VI, p. 101.

Qarkeh-aml—the chief of Onggirat tribe, and brought all the Onggirat people under the command of Dei Sechen and his descendants.¹⁴

According to *The Secret History*, Chinggis Khan’s mother Hö’elün Üjin was an Onggirat woman abducted by Yesügei Ba’atur.¹⁵

The story of this abduction is very dramatic. One day, Yesügei was hunting with hawks at the Onon River and he saw a man of the Merkit tribe, named Yeke-Chiliedü, who had just married a girl from the Olqunu’ud, a sub-tribe of the Onggirat tribe, and was returning home with his wife. The bride was beautiful. Yesügei immediately summoned his two brothers, Nekün Taisi and Daritai Odchigin, to abduct the bride. They drove the bridegroom away and brought Hö’elün to their home.¹⁶

Hö’elün wept bitterly when she was seized. *The Secret History* tells us that her cry was so loud that even the water in the Onon River and the trees in the woods vibrated.¹⁷ Obviously, she loved her groom, and when she realized that Yesügei and his brothers were going to abduct her, had urged him to flee in order to save his life. *The Secret History* tells us that she said to him:

Hast thou observed those three men? They are other [in countenance] than [all other] countenances. They have the countenance [of being desirous] of attaining unto thy life. If there be [for thee] but thy life, there are [for thy]

Maidens

At every forefront;

Women

¹⁴ According to the Biography of Dei Sechen in *Xin Yuanshi*, Chinggis Khan granted Die’erge Ke’emiele a girl named Buyisaika. Die’erge disliked the girl’s appearance and said that she looks like a toad, and he did not want to marry her. That made Chinggis Khan angry and had him killed. (*XYS. Juan* 114, p. 521. Ke Shaomin does not clearly state the relationship between this girl and Chinggis Khan. But Rashid Al-din said that she was a daughter of Chinggis Khan, “During Genghis Khan’s time among his great officers was one from the Qunqirat tribe, Targa El, chief of a group of them. He submitted to Genghis Khan and accompanied him. Genghis Khan gave him a daughter of his named _____. As he was giving her he said, ‘your daughter is a frog and a turtle. How can I take her?’ Highly offended, [Genghis Khan] had him executed.” (Rashiduuddin Fazlullah, *Jami’u’t-Tawarikh, Compendium of Chronicles: a history of the Mongols*, trans. by W. M. Thackston, Harvard University, 1998, Part One, ch. 4. p. 85.). I assume that Chinggis’ original intention was to establish a marriage relationship with Qarkeh-aml for the purpose of controlling the Onggirat tribe. It is also probable that Chinggis Khan intentionally offered him an ugly girl in order to find an excuse to kill him and transfer his tribe people to his father-in-law Dei Sechen.

¹⁵ Ba’atur/Batur meant warrior in Mongolian language.

¹⁶ *YCMS*, p. 18, annotated by Chen Binhe. *The Secret History*, ch.1, p. 12-3.

¹⁷ *The Secret History*, ch. 1, p. 13_ *YCMS*, p.18.

At every black cart.

If there be [for thee] but thy life, thou shalt find a maiden or a woman. Thou shalt also name Hö'elün [her] which hath another name. Save thy life. Go scenting my scent.¹⁸

Then she took off her undershirt and gave it to Yeke-Chiliedü as a memento.

When she was seized by Yesügei, she wept and said:

Mine "elder brother" Chledü is one

Whose tuft hath never blown

Against the wind;

Whose belly hath never hungered

In the desert land.

Now how, tossing his two braids [of hair] one time on his breast, one time forward, one time backward, how [so] doing, goeth he."¹⁹

It was, in fact, legal to abduct a married woman in early Mongol society. In the prevailing societal view, a woman could only obey her destiny, and was not allowed to protest. In the case of Hö'elün, her relationship with Yesügei seemed quite harmonious, and she gave birth to four sons and one daughter. The eldest son was Temüjin, the other three in order were Qasar, Qachi'un, and Temüge. Her only daughter was Temülün.

Hö'elün, however, became a very important woman in Mongol history. Her historical reputation rests on the fact that she was the mother of Chinggis, but some scholars dispute her maternity.²⁰ As a great Mongol hero, he

¹⁸ *Ibid*, ch. I, pp. 12-13. *YCMS*, p. 18

¹⁹ *Ibid*, ch. I, p. 13. *YCMS*, p. 19.

²⁰ See, for example, Hadesi, a scholar in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, tells us a different story based on Kazakhstan tales and historical sources, and suggests that Temüjin's father was probably not Yesügei, instead, the Merkit people. "After about ten days when Yesügei got Hö'elün, she was again abducted by the Merkit people. She lived in an embarrassing situation. She even did not know whose child she conceived. When Yesügei knew that Hö'elün bore a boy, he named him Temüjin, the same name of a warrior he captured. Yesügei treated Temüjin as his own child. Hö'elün also treated the children born by the other wife of Yesügei as her own children. However, there were always conflicts among Temüjin, his younger brothers Begter, and Belgütei. One day, Temüjin said to Bieketer: 'you are not born by Hö'elün.' Begter answered back: 'only you are not born by my father Yesügei. We, Bieliegutai, Hasar, Tiemugai, Tiemulun, are all the children of Yesügei, but you are not his son. We all know this, and all the people in the tribe know it. Your body had the blood of the Merkit people. Hö'elün conceived you and bore you when she came to our tribe. If you do not believe me, you can ask your mother, she knows it the most clearly.' Temüjin angrily shouted: 'Do not say that

founded the Great Mongol Empire and significantly changed the world order in the twelfth and thirteen centuries. Therefore, in a sense, it is fair to say that the abduction of Hö'elün was significant for it changed Mongol history and even world history.

There is also a story recorded in *The Secret History* about the formal establishment of the marriage relationship between the Chinggis' tribe and the Onggirat tribe.

When Temüjin was nine years old, his father Yesügei took him to his maternal grandfather's tribe to make an offer of marriage. On the way they met Dei Sechen, a nobleman of the Onggirat tribe. When Dei Sechen learned that Yesügei was looking for a girl for Temüjin, he examined the boy and found that he had bright eyes, and glowed with health and vigor, “with fire in his eyes, with light in his face.”²¹ He then invited Yesügei and Temüjin to see his daughter, Börte, who was ten years old and pretty. The two fathers then decided on marriage between their children.

The next day when Yesügei asked Dei Sechen to allow him to take the girl with them, Dei Sechen said,

If I give [my daughter], [after] letting [thee] request [her] many times, shall [I] be exalted? If [I] give [my daughter], [after] letting [thee] request [her but] a few times, shall [I] be abashed? [It will not be so, for] the destiny of a girl is not to wax old at the door where she was born. I will give [unto thee] my daughter. And go [thou], leaving thy son as son in law.²²

Yesügei presented a horse as a betrothal gift for his son and left Temüjin in Dei Sechen's home as an uxori-local son-in-law.

nonsense!’ soon after, Temüjin killed Begter with an arrow.” (Hadesi, “Hasakezu Kelie buluo jiqi Wang Han Tuherele (Khazak Kereit tribe and it's Tukhorel Khan).” In *Journal of Xinjiang Normal University*, vol. 18. No. 4, 1997, pp. 20-27). This study, based on the folk memories and local historical records among the Khazak people in Xingjiang, convincingly accounts for the true motivation of Temüjin's murder of his younger brother. *The Secret History* offers an explanation that Temüjin and Hasar killed Begter because he took away a lark they shoot down with a bone-tipped arrow and a shiny fish they caught. But this does not seem to be a strong enough reason for them to kill the boy. (*The Secret History*, pp. 22-23)

²¹ *The Secret History*, ch. I, p. 15.

²² *The Secret History*, ch. I, p. 17. A simpler translation might be: “If you have asked me many times and I finally give my daughter to you, it indicates that I am putting her in a high position. If you have just asked me once and I give her to you immediately, that indicates that I am putting her in a lower position. Of course, it's unreasonable for a girl to become old and die in the household where she was born. I will give my daughter to your son, but you should leave your son here as a son-in-law.” *YCMS* / Chen Binhe, p. 23.

In the course of his return, Yesügei accepted an invitation to feast with a Tartar tribe who were his hereditary enemies. Once the Tartar people recognized that he was the man who had captured their chief in a battle nine years ago, they put poison in his food. Three days later, after returning home, Yesügei died. Before he died, however, he entrusted his servant Münglig to bring Temüjin home from his parents-in-law's.²³

Yesügei's death, needless to say, brought hardship to his widows and children, with his subjects refusing to obey the orders of his widow Hö'elün and his children, and finally they abandoning them. Hö'elün, however, was a steadfast and persevering woman, and we are told that even in such adverse circumstances, she raised five little children alone by collecting wild fruits and digging roots.²⁴

When Temüjin reached the proper age, he returned to Dei Sechen's home to marry his betrothed wife, Börte. We found, however, two different accounts of the attitude of Dei Sechen to his return. According to the *Secret History*, Dei Sechen was very happy and immediately permitted Temüjin to marry his daughter, he and his wife Chotan sending the newly-married couple off in person as far as the Kerulen River, from where Dei Sechen returned home while his wife traveled with the couple to Temüjin's home.²⁵ On the other hand, according to Rashid Al-din, Dei Sechen obstructed this marriage, and only through the good offices of Anchen, the elder brother of Börte, who was on good terms with Temüjin, did they eventually get married.²⁶

Temüjin, it seems, had long been determined to restore the power and fame of his family and to revenge his father. To gain support from Ong-Khan, the chief of the Kereit tribe, which was the most powerful tribe at that time, Temüjin presented him with a valuable black marten garment which had been part of the dowry of his wife. Ong-Khan had been the *anda* (sworn brother) of Temüjin's father, and therefore Temüjin acknowledged Ong-Khan as his adoptive father.²⁷ Since then, the alliance of these two tribes was established, and with the help of Ong-Khan, Temüjin became more powerful and was able gradually, to destroy most of his enemies. Without this alliance, it is doubtful that the rise of Temüjin would have been possible, and it had a profound effect on the marriage relationships of the House of Chinggis

²³ *Ibid.*, ch. I, p 18.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, ch. II, p 20-22.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p 32.

²⁶ Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi' al-Tawarikh (Shiji)*, vol. 1a, p. 264.

²⁷ *The Secret History*, Ch. III, p 38.

in later times. The Onggiract would become the most important of the marriage relationships established by the Yuan royal house.

In the following war years, Chinggis took in more than ten wives (*Mon. Hatun*, queen and ladies) and fathered many children, but Börte and her children were unchallenged in the highest position. Börte herself was posthumously titled as “*Guang xian yi sheng* Empress.” (Empress who honored and assisted the Holy Emperor).

After the death of his father in 1227, his successor, Ögödei Khan, issued an imperial edict saying: “Girls born into the Onggirat tribe should become Empresses (of Mongol rulers) for generations. Boys born into the Onggirat tribe should marry princesses (of Mongol rulers) for generations. It should never cease.”²⁸ This regulation seems to have retained in the Yuan, and Onggirat nobles were granted great privileges.

For instance, the Onggirat descendents of Anchen, were granted a fief (*shiyi* in Jining *Lu* in the territory of the ancient state of Lu in China (present Shandong province). Therefore, they were titled Prince of Prefecture of Jining, Prince of Jining, and Prince of State of Lu. The princesses who married them were all titled Princess of State of Lu.

Changji, the grandson of Chigu (the first son of Anchen) of the Onggirat, was sent by Khubilai Khan to guard the Prefecture of Xining (in present Qinghai Province), therefore this group of the Onggirat people migrated to Qinghai. Chigu’s fief was in Puyang (in present Henan province). Therefore, Changji was titled Prince of Ningpu and Prince of Puyang. In addition, because Changji’s new fief was in the west of the Qishan, his brother Tuotuoshur was titled Prince of Qi.²⁹

In 1270 (the seventh year of the Zhiyuan era), Woluochen, the son of Nachen (the third son of Anchen), built a city named Yingchang in the Dar Haizi area.³⁰ In 1295 (the first year of the Yuanzhen era), Woluochen’s younger brother Manzitai built a new city named Quanning in present Inner Mongolia. Each of these cities had governed a circuit. All the officials within the fief were selected and appointed by the Prince of the State of Lu.³¹ Therefore, the lands governed by the Onggirat nobles covered a vast part of northern China and southern Mongolia.

²⁸ YS 114:2869. See the biography of Bortie (Borte). YS 118:2915. See the biography of Texuechan (Dei Sechan).

²⁹ Han Rulin, et. al. *Zhongguo dabaike quanshu-Yuanshi*, Zhongguo Da Baikequanshu Chubanshe, (1985): 42-3.

³⁰ Three hundred *li* east of Shangdu, YS, 118: 2920.

³¹ Han Rulin, et. al. *Zhongguo dabaike quanshu-Yuanshi*, pp. 42-3.

Onggirat Men Married to Mongol Princesses

According to the *Yuanshi*, the father-in-law of Chinggis Khan, Dei Sechen, had three sons, they were Anchen, Huohu, and Ce,³² although Dei Sechen himself did not command troops in Chinggis' wars of conquest, his three sons played an important role. The three thousand mounted troops of the Onggirat tribe were commanded by Anchen and participated in the campaign against Ong-Khan and the expedition against the Naimans. In 1206, Chinggis granted Anchen the official title of *Battalion Commander* (*qianhu*). In the campaign against the Jin dynasty, Anchen first fought in the east of the Liao and forced the Jin general Yeliao Liuge to surrender to the Mongols. Later when Chinggis Khan led most of the Mongol troops to launch a westward expedition, Anchen was ordered to stay to take part in the campaign under the command of Muqali and became one of the ten high-ranking officials (*tikong*).

When Chinggis returned from the Western Regions, he ordered Anchen to command his troops in the campaigns against the Xi Xia. In 1227 (the 22nd year of Taizu) Anchen was granted an honorary name "Imperial (National) Maternal Uncle Noble" (*Guojiu Nayan*). In 1232 (the fourth year of the reign of Ögödei), he was granted a silver seal and a title the Prince of Hexi. In 1236, he was granted 5,200 households in Dongping which were captured by his troops. The next year he was granted 200,000 *min*³³ of cash. According to the *Yuanshi*, Anchen participated in thirty-two campaigns and distinguished himself to all of them.³⁴ He was titled Prince of Jining posthumously. His eldest son Chiku married Princesses Tumanlun, who was the third daughter of Chinggis Khan and was titled Princess of the State of Yun.³⁵ In 1206 Chiku was granted a title of the commander of 1,000 households and led his troops to guard the region east of Liao under the commander of Qasar, the younger brother of Chinggis Khan.³⁶

No detailed records remain describing the activities of Huohu, the second son of Dei Sechen, in the *Yuanshi*. All we know is that he was granted a large landholding in the area of east Mongolia which bordered on

³² Rashid Al-din claims that Dei Sechen had two sons and one daughter, but he did not mention Ce. See *Shiji*, vol. 1a, p. 264

³³ One *min* contained one thousand copper coins.

³⁴ YS 118: 2915. XYS 114:521.

³⁵ XYS 114:521.

³⁶ YS 118: 2915-23.

the territory of the Ikires tribe.³⁷ It was recorded that his grandson Buzhier married Princess Wokezhen.

Dei Sechen's third son Ce was granted a title of “*Battalion Commander*” by Chinggis Khan. His son Harhasun was active in the campaign against the Jin and was conferred an honorific title *batur* (warrior). In 1267, (the fourth year of Shizu) the grandson of Harhasun, Duluor was awarded the title of Grand Master for Splendid Happiness (*Guanglu Dafu*), and he was awarded a silver plate and granted a title of Duke of the state of Yi. The son of Anchen, Wochen was given the title of Brigade Commander (*Wanhu*) in 1238, and married Princess Yesu-Buhua, the daughter of Tolui.

When Wochen died, his younger brother Nachen inherited the title of *Brigade Commander* in 1238 and married Princess Xuezhigan, the granddaughter of Chinggis Khan. Nachen played a role in the campaign in Sichuan under the command of Möngke Khan. In 1261 (the second year of the Zhongtong era he led his sons Hahai Tuohuan and Woluochen together with other princes, to launch a punitive campaign against Khubilai's younger brother Arigh Böke. His troops defeated the troops of Barharhu, a general of Arigh Böke, and pursued them to Boluoketu. In this battle they killed more than ten thousand troops of Arigh Böke.³⁸

When Nachen died, his son Woluochen inherited the title of *Brigade Commander* and married Princess Wanze. After she died, he married Princess Nangjiazhen, another daughter of Khubilai Khan. Woluochen died in 1278, and since he did not have a son, his younger brother Tiemuer inherited the title *Brigade Commander* in 1281 and married his elder brother's widow, Princess Nangjiazhen. In 1287, Naiyan, the great-great-grandson of Odchigin (Chinggis Khan's youngest brother), rebelled against Khubilai, and Tiemuer was ordered to lead his troops to suppress the rebellion. He was granted the title of “Prince of the prefecture of Jining.” In the year 1282 Princes Hadan-Tulugan, the descendent of Qachi'un (Chinggis Khan's younger brother), rebelled against Khubilai, and Tiemuer led his troops, together with other princes, to suppress the rebellion. His troops were successful and Khubilai Khan granted him the name Anchardu Noyan to commend his contributions.³⁹

When Tiemuer died, his two sons Diao'a-bula and Sangge-bula were still young. So Manzitai the younger brother of Tiemuer, inherited the title of *Brigade Commander* in 1290. Manzitai also married the widow of his elder

³⁷ YS 118:2919. Aso See Ye Xinmin, “Hongjilabu de fengjian lingdi zhidu,” *Menggushi lunwen xuanji*, Huhehaote Shi Menggu Yuwen Lishi Xuehui, 1(1983): 223.

³⁸ YS 118: 2916.

³⁹ YS 118: 2916. Anchardu meant “of reputation” in Mongolian.

brother, princess Nangjiazhen. When Chengzong succeeded to the throne, Nangjiazhen was titled “Princess Supreme of the State of Lu”, while Manzitai was titled “Prince of the prefecture of Jining” with a gold seal. Manzitai was ordered to lead his troops to suppress the rebel princes Haidu (Qaidu) and Du’a, and he was said to have displayed great bravery and rushed into the enemy’s battle array four times, throwing the enemy into confusion, and thereby defeating them. After princess Nangjiazhen died, he married Nange Bula, who was the daughter of the crown prince Jin Gim.

Manzitai died when he was fifty-two years old. In the third month of 1307 (the eleventh year of the Dade era), Diao’a-Bula, the eldest son of Tiemuer, inherited the title of Brigade Commander and married Sengge Ragi (Xiangge-Laji, who was granted the title of “Princess Supreme of the State of Lu” in the sixth month of the same year. Diao’a-Bula was granted a gold seal and the title of “Prince of the State of Lu”. Later during the Tianli era (1328-29) in Wenzong’s (Tuq Temür) reign, Sengge Ragi had six characters “*Huiwen yifu zhenshou*” (beautiful literature, good happiness, faithful, and long life) added to her title. Sengge Ragi had a keen interest in Chinese painting and calligraphy and became a notable collector.⁴⁰ Wenzong was the son of Wuzong, and thus, he called Sengge Ragi “Imperial Aunt” (*Huanggu*).⁴¹

Diao’a-Bula died in 1310 (the third year of the Zhida era). His son Alijiashili inherited the title of Brigade Commander in the same year when he was only eight years old. In the seventh month of the next year he was granted the title “Prince of the State of Lu.” He married princess Duor-Zhiban who was titled Princess *Suyixianning* later during the Zhishun era.⁴² Alijiashili died in the first year of Yuantong (1333).

Sange-Bula was the younger brother of Diao’a-Bula and the uncle of Alijiashili. He was raised from childhood in Princess Nangjiazhen’s home under the order of Khubilai. Later he inherited four hundred households of

⁴⁰ See Fu Shen, *Nü cangjia huangzi da zhang gongzhu: Yuan dai huang shi shu hua shou cang shi lue*, [Historical sketch of the collection of paintings of the Yuan Emperors: the collection of Princess Sengge Ragi], *Gu gong ji kan*, (1978) vol. 13, no. 1 pp. 25-52. “Princess Sengge Ragi: Collector of Painting and Calligraphy.” Tr. Marsha Weidner. In Weidner, ed. (1990), 55-80. Her position as a member of the imperial family obviously provided her with the means to collect, but one cannot help but feel, that her people’s foreignness was what allowed her to pursue her literary interests, including the hosting of an “elegant gathering” of the most notable scholars of her day, impervious to traditional Chinese mores.

⁴¹ See Francis Woodman Cleaves, “The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1335.”

⁴² *Yuanshi* does not state whose daughter the princess was and in which year she was titled. Since Zhishun was the title of Wenzong’s reign, the *Xin Yuanshi* assumes that she might be the daughter of Wenzong.

his tribe. In Chengzong's reign (1295-1307) he received an imperial decree to marry Princess Puna who was granted the title of “Princess Supreme of Yun'an” in the Zhishun era (1330-1332). Sangge-Bula was granted a gold seal and titled “Prince of Yun'an” and commanded 1,000 households. In 1333 he was promoted to Battalion Commander. The next year he was titled “Prince of the State of Lu”. Sangge-Bula died when he was sixty-one years old.⁴³

All of the men mentioned above had inherited the title of prince and had married princesses, and all were of the Onggirat tribe. Some other Onggirat men who married princesses of Yuan did not inherit the title of prince. Though it is impossible to be sure since many of the princesses they married are not listed in the Table of Princesses in the *Yuanshi*. In the following paragraph I attempt to reorder them from one line to another.

The father-in-law of Chinggis Khan Dei Sechen's third son, Ce, was granted the title of Battalion Commander to command the troops of his own tribe during Chinggis Khan's reign. Ce's son Har-Hasun participated in the campaign against the Jin and was granted a title *Batur*. Har-Hasun's grandson Duluor was granted the title of “Grand Master for Splendid Happiness” in 1267 and was titled “Prince of the State of Yi” with a silver plate.

Anchen's son Suor-Huodu participated in Chinggis Khan's wars of conquest and was granted the nominal title of Assistant Chancellor.⁴⁴ He was also granted the title of Battalion Commander, and a gold-plated silver plate. His son was called *Fuma Aha* in the *Yuanshi*, but the *Yuanshi* does not state which princess he married. Aha led troops to capture Xuzhou city in Möngke Khan's reign (1251-1259). He was awarded one cube of gold and ten cubes of silver as well as a silver saddle, and also he inherited his father's official title. Tuolian was also a descendant of Anchen, who was granted the title of Battalion Commander in Khubilai Khan's reign and was ordered to guard the Kerulen River area in Mongolia. In 1287, he took part in the expedition suppressing Naiyan's rebellion, distinguished himself in action, and was thus granted a name “*batur*.” When Tuolian died, his son Bengbula inherited the title of Battalion Commander. When Bengbula died, his son Maizhuhan inherited the title of Battalion Commander and married Princess Baidasha, about whom we have little information. When Maizhuhan died, his younger

⁴³ YS 118: 2915. XYS 114:521-23.

⁴⁴ Ke Shaomin in *Xin Yuanshi* believes that it should be in Ögödei's (Taizong) reign when Suor-Huodu was granted an assistant Prime-minister because this title had not been created until the third year of Taizong's reign. And Suor-Huodu was the youngest son of An Chen, he might be too young to be granted such a title.

brother Boluo Tiemur inherited the title of *Battalion Commander*. In the 1325 he was granted the title of “Prince of Yude” and a gold seal. When Boluo Tiemur died, Maizhuhan’s grandson Ashi inherited the title of *Battalion Commander*.

Chouhan was the descendant of Bige, the second son of Anchen. He married Princess Taihuludu, and was titled “Prince of Anyuan” in the reign of Renzong (1312-1320).

Anchen’s grandson Nahe married Princess Suor-Hahan, the daughter of Ögödei Khan.

Dei Sechen’s second son Huohu’s grandson Buzhier married Prince Wokezhen.

Dei Sechen’s grandson Tuoluohem married Princess Bulughan, and later remarried Princess Kuokuolun.

In total, and as far as we can tell, nine women of this tribe were called Empresses or titled Empresses posthumously. Nineteen men of this tribe married Mongol princesses, and thirteen of them were titled princes. This shows the close relationship between the Chinggisid clan and the Onggirat clan.

Yuan Empresses from the Onggirat Tribe

In the Yuan Dynasty, thirteen women of the Bosihuer Onggirat tribe became the principal Empresses.

This should come as no surprise since, as we have suggested, the Onggirat tribe maintained a very stable marriage relationship with the Chinggisid clan from a very early time. Chinggis Khan’s first wife, Borte, was from this tribe. Two of his son Chaghatei’s wives, one of Möngke’s wives, two of Khubilai’s wives. Among the Ill-Khans in the Middle East, two of the seven wives of the Hülegü (the fifth son of Tolui), one of Hülegü’s son Abaha’s wives, two of Ahmed Tigoudar’s wives, two of Abaha’s son Aluhun’s wives, and two of Aluhun’s son Khazan’s wives, were all from the Onggirat tribe.

These statistics of the Empresses of the Yuan court who came from the Onggirat tribe is mainly based on the biographies of Empresses and Imperial Concubines (*hou fei zhuan*), and the biography of Dei Sechen in the *Yuanshi*, with some modifications according to the *Mengwuer shiji*, *Menggu yuanliu*, *Jami’al-Tavarikh* (Collection of Histories, *Shiji*) by Rashid Al-din, and *Historie des Mongols* by D’Ohsson.

After Chinggis Khan married Börte, eleven Mongol Emperors married thirteen Onggirat women, and these rulers thus make up 65% of the seventeen Mongol Khans and Emperors from Chinggis Khan to the last Emperor of Yuan—Shundi, Toghan-Temür. Of the six Emperors who did not marry Onggirat women, two of them were too young for marriage when they ascended the throne. One was Tianshun Di, Arigiba (Asu-Jiba), who was only nine years old when he died and had a very short reign of only one month, while the other was Ningzong Irinjibal (Yilin-Zhiban) who died at 7 and was on the throne for only forty-three days. The other four Emperors who did not marry Onggirat women were Ruizong (Tolui), Taizong (Ögödei), Dingzong (Güyük), and Mingzong (Qoshila). Tolui was actually not an official Emperor but rather a regent for one year who was titled Ruizong posthumously. Mingzong never formally ascend the throne in the Grand Capital (Dadu) as he was murdered by his younger brother Wenzong before he could do so.

Therefore, there were only two khans who did not marry Onggirat women: Ögödei and his son Güyük. It is somewhat strange that it was Ögödei who proclaimed the imperial decree that only women born to the Onggirat tribe should be selected as Mongol Empresses but in fact only he himself and his son did not follow it. It is possible that they actually had wives from the Onggirat tribe but they were not recorded, since the records of the wives of Ögödei and Güyük are not complete. Alternatively, the records might have been modified by the descendants of Tolui after they took the throne from the line of Ögödei.

If we were to list the Onggirat imperial women, the list would be:

1. Möngke Khan's Empress Hu[du]Tai and Empress Yesuer were the daughters of Manggechen who was the son of Ce (the third son of Dei Sechen).
2. Khubilai's Empress Chabui was the daughter of Anchen. Khubilai's principal Empress Nambui was the daughter of Xiantong who was the grandson of Nachen (Anchen's son). Khubilai's Empress Tegülün (Tiegulun) was the daughter of Tuolian (grandson of Anchen).⁴⁵
3. The Empress of Chengzong (Temür Öljeitü), Shiliandali, was the daughter of Woluochen, the son of Nachen.

⁴⁵ According to *Yuanshi*-“*Houfei Biao*”, Tie Gulun was the Grand Empress. But she did not receive any title of honor. She was even not titled posthumously. She did not have a biography in *Yuanshi* either. Therefore we know very little about her.

4. The principal wife of Darmabala was Daji who was the daughter of Hundu-Tiemuer (Anchen's grandson). Daji gave birth to Qaishan, and when Qaishan ascended the throne in 1307, Daji was titled "Empress Dowager of *Zhaoxian yuansheng*." Later, in 1310, she added another title of Honor "Empress Dowager of *Tianyi xingsheng*." When Renzong ascended the throne, Daji added twelve characters on her title—"Ciren zhaoyi shouyuan quande taining fuqing" in 1315. When Yingzong, Shuode Bala, succeeded to the throne in 1320, Daji was titled Supreme Empress Dowager and added four more characters—*Huiwen chongyou* on her title. Daji was undoubtedly the only woman who received so many honorific titles.
5. Wuzong's Empress Zhengge was the daughter of Bengbula (son of Tuolian). Wuzong's another Empress Sugeshili was the daughter of Harzhi (son of Manggechen).
6. Emperor Taiding's Empress Babuhan was the daughter of Woliuchar (grandson of Anchen). His other two Empresses Bihan and Sugedali were both the daughters of Maizhuhan (grandson of Tuolian),⁴⁶ Prince of Yan.
7. Mingzong's Empress Buyanhudu was the daughter of Boluo Tiemuer.
8. Wenzong's Empress Budashili was the daughter of Diao'abula (Diwabula).

In addition to these, there are four Empresses from the Onggirat tribe whose fathers are unknown. They are Renzong's Empress Anashisheli who was the mother of Yingzong, Ningzong's Empress Daliyetemishi, Yuzong's Empress Bolan Yeqiechi, and Xianzong's (Ganmala) Empress Puyanqielimishi.

Besides the Yuan Emperors, many Mongol princes' families maintained long-term marital relationships with Dei Sechan's clan. Among the four sons of Chinggis Khan, two married women from the Onggirat tribe. Chinggis

⁴⁶ The records in *Yuanshi* including those in "*Houfei Zhuan*," "*Houfei Biao*," and the "Dei Sechen Zhuan," differ about the father of Babuhan. "*Houfei Zhuan*" and "De Sechen Zhuan" record that she was the daughter of Woliuchar but "*Houfei Biao*" records that she was the daughter of Maizhuhan, and was the elder sister of empress Bihan and Empress Sugedali. In addition, "*Houfei Zhuan*" and "De Sechen Zhuan" all record that Bihan and Sugedali were the Noble Consorts of Emperor Taiding, but "*Houfei Biao*" records that they were both Empresses.

Khan's eldest son, Jochi Khan's two wives were from the Onggirat tribe. One of them was the daughter of Anchen noyan, Öki-fujin Khatun.⁴⁷ The second son of Chinggis Khan, Chaghatai's two principal wives, Yesülün Khatun and Tögen Khatun, were from the Onggirat tribe. According to Rashid Al-din, they were the daughters of Qata Noyan, the son of Daritai, the brother of the ruler of the Qonqirat. Daritai was the brother of Dei Sechan; therefore Rashid mentions that Yesülün Khatun was the cousin of Börte, the principal wife of Chinggis Khan.⁴⁸

The Japanese scholar, Uno Nobuhiro, has studied the sister marriage exchanges between Chinggisid clan and the Dei Sechen clan of the Onggirat tribe. He claims that Jochi's marriage was significant.⁴⁹ The Chinggis Khan had tried to establish an exchange marriage relationship with Ong-Khan's family of the Kereit tribe. He proposed that his daughter Qojin Beki marry Tusaqa, son of Senggün, and that Jochi marry Senggün's younger sister Cha'ur.⁵⁰ Although this proposal was not accepted by Ong-Khan, this sister marriage exchange relationship was successfully established between Jochi and Anchen's son Chigu. Jochi married Chigu's sister Öki-fujin, and Chigu married Jochi's younger sister Tumanlun. Chinggis Khan himself, therefore selected Jochi to establish this marriage relationship with the Onggirat people indicating that he did not discriminate against Jochi because of his possible Merkit blood. On the contrary, he might have intended to establish Jochi as his successor.

Jochi's eldest son Orda-Quli married three Onggirat women as his chief wives. “One of them being Jüke Khatun of the Qongqirat people, another Tobaqana, also of Qonqirat, and another—, likewise of the Qonqirat, whose father's name was Öge Khan; [Orda] married her after her father's death.”⁵¹

It seems clear from all we have said above that the imperial marriage custom of the Mongol Yuan was a type of hereditary system, in which an

⁴⁷ *The Successors*, 2:99-107. As to the first son of Jochi Khan—Orda, “He was born of [Jochi Khan's] chief wife, Sorghan by name, of the Qonqirat people.” As to the second son of Jochi Khan—Batu, “He was born of Öki-fujin Khatun, the daughter of Alchi Noyan, of the Qonqirat people.”

⁴⁸ *The Successors*, 3:135. “Chaghatai had many wives, but the most important of them were two. The first, Yesülün Khatun, who was the mother of all his chief sons, was the daughter of Qata Noyan, the son of Daritai, the brother of the ruler of the Qonqirat. Börte Fujin, the chief wife of Chinggis-Khan, and Yesülün Khatun, were cousins. The second was Tögen Khatun, the sister of the aforesaid Yesülün Khatun, whom he married after Yesülün's death.”

⁴⁹ Uno Nobuhiro, “Hungjilabu yu Chengjisihan xi tonghun guanxi de bianqian”, (trans. from *Toyoshi kenkyu*, vol. 52, No. 3.) *Mengguxue xinxi*, 67 (1997): 1-7.

⁵⁰ *The Secret History*, Ch V. (1982): 89.

⁵¹ *The Successors*, 2:100. Rashid Al-Din left the blanks in his book.

Emperor's Consorts would be selected mainly from one or two Mongol noble tribes. Moreover, these special marriage ties were maintained over several generations, and even to the end of the Yuan dynasty in China. The most renowned "Imperial In-law" (*waiqi*) was the Onggirat tribe.

The Onggirat tribe and the other tribes who maintained a stable marriage relationship with the Yuan royal family all had their fiefs (*touxia*).

There were two different administrative systems and land systems in the Yuan dynasty. One was governmental, administrated by provinces (*xingsheng*), prefectures (*jun*), and counties (*xian*). The officials within this system were appointed by the central government, and the tax revenue in this system belonged to the central government. The other system was the *touxia* that was granted to the princes, imperial sons-in-law and meritorious ministers. The officials in a *touxia* were first appointed by its proprietor, then were reported to the central government to be granted titles. Most of the tax revenue and products of the *touxia* belonged to its proprietor.

According to the *Yuanshi*, the Onggirat tribe held a large number of fiefs. As early as Chinggis Khan's reign, Anchen and his brothers had been granted a huge tract of land in Mongolia. Later, in this territory, several circuits (*lu*) were established, including Yingchang Lu and Quanning Lu which belonged to the "Prince of Lu". The Onggirat tribe also accumulated many other manors in other areas. For example, the three prefectures—Ji, Yan, and Shan in Jining Lu, commanded sixteen counties; the six counties in Ting Zhou Lu, seven counties in Yong Ping Lu. These areas cover parts of three present provinces of Shandong, Jiangsu and Jiangxi.

Speaking historically, and from a practical point-of-view, it would have been very easy for such a powerful tribe to control the imperial court and threaten the existence of the dynasty. However, although some Empress-dowagers in the Yuan dynasty were regents, there are no examples of imperial maternal uncles or other male relatives of the imperial women who controlled imperial political affairs. This is in marked contrast to native Chinese dynasties like, for instance, the Han where the *waiqi* played an important role in the dynastic fall.

The following reasons may account for this. First of all, every duke or prince in the Yuan dynasty had his own fief in which he could behave however he pleased. The fief was actually like his mini-kingdom where the multiplicity of his functions and certain problems diverted his attention from the throne. Secondly, and it may be the most important factor, the Yuan imperial court maintained its "military democratic" tradition throughout the dynasty. This meant that princes and nobles were always invited to discuss and help to determine important state political or military affairs. In addition,

the “Four *Keshig* System” of Yuan also contributed to safeguard this tradition.

The “Four *keshigs*” was a safeguard army established by Chinggis Khan in unifying Mongolia. It was composed of skilled and strong men who were the sons of Brigade Commanders, Battalion Commanders (*qianhu*), Company Commanders (*baihu*), Squad Commanders (*shihu*), as well as common people (*baishenren*). According to the military service laws of the Yuan, every noble (*noyan*) was bound to send his son to serve the Mongol Khan, so that the key members of the *keshig* were sons of the Mongol nobles. The main duties of the *keshig* were to safeguard the imperial court and to be in charge of the various affairs in the imperial court.⁵² At the same time, it was also a fresh and combat-worthy troop directly under the command of the Emperor. Chinggis Khan appointed his four meritorious generals—Borhu, Borshu, Muqali, and Chila’un as the Chiefs of *keshig* army who safeguarded the imperial court. This was an important institution in the Yuan dynasty. Because the sons of nobles or meritorious generals worked around the Emperors, the influences of *waiqi* and eunuchs were effectively controlled. Tu Ji presents his comments at the end of the biography of Botu:

Amongst the Mongol Emperor’s relatives on the side of his wives or mother, the Onggirat tribe was the most illustrious, and this tribe had a separate fief governed by it. Although it took part in the expeditions and campaigns with its own people, except for collecting the land rents and tax, it had not been granted any imperial authority. Therefore it did not suffer the disaster that befell [the *waiqi*] in Han and Tang dynasties where the entity of the *waiqi* were executed. This strategy was actually adopted by the Qing dynasty. De Sechen had foresight in choosing a son-in-law; he helped Temüjin to become an Emperor. Therefore he was the benefactor of Chinggis Khan, and moreover his descendants contributed greatly to the state. Although they did not have the astuteness and resourcefulness of the people in the Wei and Huo families in the Han dynasty, they cannot be seen only as the fathers or brothers of the Empresses and Noble Consorts. Botu was intelligent, for he associated with Chinggis Khan on his own initiative and went through thick and thin together with him. It was especially important in the initial stage.⁵³

⁵² For a detailed discussion of the important role of the *Keshig* in the Yuan politics, see Li Zhi’an, “Qixue yu Yuandai chaozheng,” *Zhongguoshi yanjiu*, 4 (1990): 110-117.

⁵³ MWESJ 23:10.

TABLE 3: *The Empresses and Imperial Concubines of Mongol Yuan from the Onggirat Tribe*

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Bortie/ Bōrte	<i>Guan xian yi sheng</i>	Chinggis Khan (Taizu)	Dei Sechen
Hudutai	<i>Zhenjie</i>	Mōngke Khan (Xianzong)	Manggechen (Dei Sechen's grandson)
Yesuer ⁵⁴		Mōngke Khaṇ	Manggechen
Chabi	<i>Zhao rui shun sheng</i>	Khubilai Khan (Shizu)	Anchen (Dei Sechen's son)
Nanbi		Khubilai Khan	Xiantong
Tiegulun		Khubilai Khan	Tuolian Anchen's grandson)
Shiliandali	<i>Zhenci jingyi</i>	Temūr (Öljeitū) Khan (Chengzong)	Woluochen (Nachen's son)
Daji	<i>Zhaoxianyuan- sheng Yitian Xingsheng Ciren Zhaoyi houyuan Quande Taining Fuqing HuiwenChongyou</i>	Tarmabala (Shunzong)	Hundu Tiemuer
Zhenge	<i>Xuancihuisheng</i>	Qaishan (Wuzong)	Bengbula
Sugeshiḷi		Qaishan	Harzhi
Babuhan		Yisūn Temūr (Emperor Taiding)	Woliuchar
Bihan		Yisūn Temūr	Maizhuhan
Sugedali		Yisūn Temūr	Maizhuhan
Buyanhudu		Qoshila (Mingzong)	Boluo Tiemuer

⁵⁴ According to Rashid Al-din, Yesuer (Yesüder) was taken by Arigh Böke's first son Yobuqur under the order of Khubilai Khan. See *The Successors*, 7:311.

Budashili	<i>Zantian kaisheng renshou huiyi xuanzhao huangtaihou</i> ⁵⁵	Tuq Temür (Wenzong)	Diwabula
Anashisheli	<i>Zhuangyicisheng</i>	Ayurbarvada (Renzong)	?
Daliyetemishi		Yilianzhiban Ningzong	?
Bolanyeqiechi	<i>Huiren yusheng</i>	Zhen Jin/Jin-Gim (Yuzong, Khubilai’s son)	?
Puyanqielimishi	<i>Xuanyi huisheng</i>	Ganmała Xianzong	?
Sorghan		Jochi (eldest son of Chinggis Khan)	?
Öki-fujin	<i>Khatun</i>	Jochi	Anchen
Yesülün	<i>Khatun</i>	Chaghatai (second son of Chinggis Khan)	Qata (Daritai’s son. Daritai was the brother of Dei Sechan)
Tögen (sister of Yesülün)	<i>Khatun</i>	Chaghatai	Qata
Jüke /Jöge	<i>Khatun</i>	Orda (eldest son of Jochi)	?
Tobaqana		Orda	?
? (levirate, inherited from Jochi Khan) ⁵⁶		Orda	Öge Khan
Hujan		Sartaqtai (first son of Orda)	?
Neidiken		Quli (second son of Orda)	?
Qutui (sister of Hujan)	<i>Khatun</i>	Hülegü (seventh son of Orda, grandson of Jochi)	?

⁵⁵ There is no record of the honorary title of Budashili in the “Hou-fei-biao,” but it appears in the basic annals of Shundi. “On [the cyclical day] Jimao [25th day] of the tenth moon of the second year of Yuantong [22 November 1334] [the Emperor] presented a jade seal and a ‘jade’ patent and offered the Empress Dowager the honorary title *Zantian kaisheng renshou huiyi xuanzhao huangtaihou*.”

⁵⁶ Rashid Al-din, *Shiji*, vol. 1a:128.

Toquluqan		Qonichi (Orda's first son Sartaqtai's first son) ⁵⁷	?
Chingtüṃ		Qonichi	?
Ilgen		Bayan (Qonichi's first son)	Temüge
Altaju		Bayan	Dödei BahaTur
Kökejin		Temür-Buqa (first son of Hüleḡü)	Yisün noyan
Bayalun (sister of Hüleḡü's wife Qutui Khatun)		Temür-Buqa	?
Öljei	<i>Khatun</i>	Möngke-Temur (second son of Toqoqan, grandson of Batu) ⁵⁸	?
Tükünche		Toqta (fifth son of Toqoqan, ruler of Goden Horde from 1291 to 1312)	?
Ariqachi		Töde-Möngke (third son of Toqoqan)	?
Qtaqash ⁵⁹	<i>Khatun</i>	Kurju (son of Ögödei)	? (son of Anchen)
Nayan Khatun ⁶⁰		Tolui	?
Bulga ⁶¹	<i>Khatun</i>	Jurikeh (son of Tolui)	? (son of Anchen)
Qutlu	<i>Khatun</i>	Arigh Böke (younger brother of Khubilai Khan)	?
Eshitei ⁶²		Arigh Böke	?

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 1a:128.

⁵⁸ *The Successors*, 2:109. *Shiji*, vol. 1a:140.

⁵⁹ Rashid Al-din, *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 267.

⁶⁰ This Empress was taken by Yobuqur, the first son of Arigh Böke. See Rashid Al-din, *The Successors*, 7: 312.

⁶¹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 267.

⁶² *The Successors*, 7:311.

TABLE 4: Princesses of the Yuan Court Married into the Onggirat Tribe

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Tumanlu	Princess of State of Yun 韃國大長公主	Chigu (Anchen's son, Prince-of Pacifying Pu)	Chinggis Khan
Suorhahan		Nahe (Anchen's grandson)	Ögödei Khan
Yesubuhua	Princess-Supreme of State of Lu 魯國大長公主	Wochen	(Tolui (Ruizong)
Kelmish-aqa ⁶³		Saljidai	Qutuqtu (third son of Tolui)
Xuezhigan(Chinggis Khan's Granddaughter)	Grand and Senior Princess of State of Lu	Nachen/Nachin	?
Wanze	Princess-Supreme of State of Lu	Woluochen	?
Nangjiazhen	Princess-Supreme of State of Lu	(1) Woluochen (2) Tiemur (3) Manzitai	Khubilai Khan
NangeBula	Princess-Supreme of State of Lu	Manzitai	Zhen Jin/Jin Gim Yuzong
Xianggelaji	Princess-Supreme of State of Lu <i>Huiwen yifu zhenshou</i>	Diao'abula (Tiemuer's son)	Dalamabala Yuzong's son (Shunzong)
Puna	Princess-Supreme of State of Lu	Sanggebula (Diao'abula's younger brother)	?
Baidasha	Princess-Supreme	Maizhuhan (Bengbula's son)	?
Taihuludu		Chouhan (Anchen's son Bige's grandson)	?

⁶³ *The Successors*, 4:160. This woman contributed greatly to the friendly relationship between Toluo's line and Jochi's line. "And because she is of the family of Tolui Khan, she is always on friendly terms with the Lord of Islam and constantly sends ambassadors to inform them of the events that occur in that country. And through her efforts, the foundations of friendship have been strengthened between Toqta and the other descendants of Jochi Khan and the Descendants of Tolui Khan, and she has put a stop to strife and enmity between them."

Wokezhen		Buzhier (Huohu's grandson)	?
Bulughan		Tuoluohé (Dei Sechen's descendant)	?
Kuokuolup		Tuoluohé	Ayurbarvada (Renzong)
Wongji Bahu ⁶⁴		Huaidu (Chigu's grandson)	?
Caizhen		Aibuge (Huaidu's younger brother)	?
Manggetai	Princess-Supreme Of State of Yun	Changji (Chi Gu's great grandson) Prince of Pacifying Pu Prefecture	?
Sanggebula	Princess-Supreme of State of Yun	Tuotumur (Prince of Qi, Son of Aibuge)	?

⁶⁴ Qian Daxin *Shijiazhai yangxin lu*, Vol. 15, “*Zhaochengxian lingzhi bei*,” “There is a Tablet of Decrees. The third decree says, ‘Princess Baihu and Fuma Hui Du’s land includes the Zhaoxian city.’ According to “*Shihuo zhi*,” the Princess of the State of Yun was granted thirty thousand households in Puzhou in the Bingshen year. Zhaocheng belonged to Puzhou, and therefore it was also her land. In addition, the “*Gongzhu Biao*” states that “Princess Wengji Bahu married Huaidu, the grandson of Chiku. Huaidu is actually Huidu on the tablet, their sounds are similar.” In the records of the first, sixth, and seventh month of 1267 (the fourth year of Zhongtong) in the basic annals of Khubilai Khan in the *Yuanshi* (YS 5:90-93), we find a woman’s name “Princess Baihu.” “[Khubilai Khan] granted a seal to Princess Baihu.” “Granted Princess Baihu’s tribe money of one thousand *dīng*. “Baihu” refers to the same princess, and ‘Wengji’ should be her tribal name “Wengjila” (Onggirat).

MARRIAGE LIST 1: *Mongol Chinggisid Royal Family Marriages to Onggirat Tribe*

1. Chinggis Khan 成吉思汗 (r. 1206-1227)(1)Bortie
2. Möngke Khan 蒙哥 (r.1251-1259).....(2)Hudutai (3)Yesuer
3. Khubilai Khan 忽必烈汗 (r. 1260-1294)(4)Chabi (5)Nanbi (6)Tiegulun
4. Temür Öljeitü 帖穆耳完澤篤 (r. 1295-1307)(7) Shiliandali
5. Dalamabala 答剌麻八剌.....(8) Daji
6. Khaishan 海山 (r. 1308-1311)(9) Zhenge (10) Sugeshili
7. Yisün Temür 也孫鉄木兒 (r.1324-1328)(11) Babuhan (12) Bihan
(13) Sugedali
8. Khoshila 和世剌 (r. 1229)(14) Buyanhudu
9. Tuq Temür 圖帖睦耳 (r. 1328-1329)(15) Budashili
10. Ayurbarvada 愛育黎拔力八達 (r. 1312-1320).....(16) Anashisheli
11. Irinjibal 懿璘只班 (r.1332)(17) Aliyetemishi
12. Jin Gim 真金.....(18) Bolanyeqiechi
13. Ganmalā 甘麻剌(19) Puyanqielimishi
14. Jochi 術赤(20) Sorghan (21) Öki-fujin
15. Chaghatai 察合臺(22)Yesülün (23) Tögen
16. Orda(24) Jüke /Jöge (25) Tobaqana
17. Sartaqtai 撒兒塔臺.....(26) Hujan
18. Quli 忽里(27) Neidiken
19. Hülegü 旭烈兀(28) Qutui
20. Qonichi 火尼赤.....(29) Toquluqan (30) Chingtüm
21. Bayan 伯顏(31) Altaju (32) Ilgen
22. Temür-Buqa 帖木兒不花(33) Kökejin (34)Bayalun
23. Möngke-Temur 蒙哥帖木兒.....(35) Öljei
24. Toqta 脫脫(36) Tükünche
25. Töde-Möngke.....(37) Ariqachi
26. Kurju 濶出(38) Qtaqash
27. Tolui 拖雷(39) Nayan

28. Jurikeh 術里客(40) Bulga
 29. Arigh Böke 阿里不哥(41) Qutlu (42) Eshitei

MARRIAGE LIST 2: *Onggirat Tribe Males Married Mongol Royal Family Females*

1. Chigu.....(1) Tumanlun
 2. Nahe(2) Suorhahan
 3. Wochen(3) Yesubuhua
 4. Saljidai(4) Kelmish-aqa
 5. Nachen(5) Xuezhigan
 6. Woluochen(6) Wanze (7) Nangjiazhen
 7. Tiemuer.....(8) Nangjiazhen
 8. Manzitai(9) Nangjiazhen (10) Nangebula
 9. Diaobula(11) Xianggelaji
 10. Alijiashili(12) Duorzhiban
 11. Sanggebula.....(13) Puna
 12. Maizhuhan(14) Baidasha
 13. Chouhan.....(15) Taihuludu
 14. Buzhier.....(16) Wokezhen
 15. Tuoluohu(17) Bulughan (18) Kuokuolun
 16. Huaidu.....(19) Wengjibahu
 17. Aibuge.....(20) Caizhen
 18. Changji.....(21) Manggetai
 19. Tuotumur(22) Sanggebula

CHAPTER SEVEN

“Two-way” Marriages: Marriages between the Mongolian Royal Family and the Ikires Tribe

Historical Background

According to Rashid Al-din, the Ikires tribe was one of the four sub-tribes of the Onggirat tribe,¹ and it was another important tribe that maintained stable marriage relationships with the royal family in the Yuan dynasty.

The marriage relationship between the Ikires tribe and the Mongolian royal house began with the marriage between Botu and Tiemulun, the younger sister of Chinggis Khan.

Botu's father, Niequn was subordinate to the Taiyichiwuti tribe (Taijigot), but. Later, Botu decided to submit to Chinggis Khan because he admired his fame. According to the biography of Botu in the *Yuanshi*, he excelled in horsemanship and marksmanship, and for this reason, Chinggis once sent Shuer-chedan as an envoy on a mission to the region of the Argun River. When Botu learned that he was sent by Chinggis, he invited him to his home and, after entertaining him cordially, gave him a fine new horse because Shuer-chedan's horse was tired. When Shuer-chedan returned to Chinggis and told him about this, Chinggis was so pleased that he decided to establish a marriage relationship with Botu, allowing Botu to marry his younger sister Tiemulun. Soon Botu's tribe sent Yebujiandai² as an envoy to discuss the marriage and to pay their respects to Chinggis Khan, “We have heard about your might and virtue. It seems that the clouds are part to reveal the sun, the spring breezes arrive and the ice melts. Therefore we are very happy.”³ When Chinggis Khan asked how many horses Botu had, Yebujiandai said that Botu had thirty horses and he was willing to present half of them as the betrothal gift. But Chinggis Khan said, “To decide a

¹ Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi' al-Tawarikh (Shiji)*, vol. 1a, p. 267.

² Yebu Jiandai is not a person's name according to *XYS*. It means “old man” in the Mongolian language.

³ *YS* 118:2921

marriage only based on the amount of property is almost like the merchant's conduct. The ancients said, 'It is very difficult to do things with one heart.' I am about to seize all the lands under heaven, and you of the Ikires tribe can follow Botu to pledge loyalty to me. What is the use of property?"⁴

Chinggis Khan's words clearly reveal the political significance of this marriage. Since at the beginning of his great undertaking, he desperately needed military talent like Botu, therefore, he was anxious to initiate this marriage so that he could take advantage of the strength of the Ikires tribe for his own ends. Botu married Tiemulun as Chinggis' uxori-local son-in-law, and according to custom, came to live with Chinggis in order to serve him as a dutiful son-in-law.⁵

When Chinggis Khan broke off relations with Jamuka, Botu was on the side of Chinggis, while the other members of his tribe were still under the control of the Taiyichi-wuti tribe who would join Jamuka in attacking Chinggis with thirty thousand troops. At the time it so happened that Botu had just sent an envoy to pay respects to his parents, and his father Niequn immediately asked the envoy to report the planned attack to Chinggis, thus giving Chinggis Khan enough time to prepare for the attack, and the attack was thwarted. As a reward for his services, when his first wife Tiemulun died early, Chinggis let Botu marry his daughter Huochen Beki (princess) as a second wife. Botu was also one of the meritorious generals who ceremoniously drank the water in the Banzhuni River with Chinggis.⁶ He participated in many campaigns with Chinggis when he was unifying the Mongol plateau, and later, helped to bring about submission of the Ikires tribe to Chinggis. Chinggis then appointed Botu as a Battalion Commander (*Qianhu*) to command the two thousand households of the Ikires tribe.

In 1218, Botu led the two thousand households of his tribe to take part in the campaign against the Jin dynasty in north China under the command of Muqali, and after that success, the number of people he governed rapidly increased to more than ten thousand households. In the seventh month of 1227, several days after Chinggis' death, Botu died of sickness in the campaign against the Xi Xia.⁷ Ögödei Khan ordered that a state funeral be held for him and as a mark of respect, his graveyard became a forbidden area

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ YCMS, p. 54, "A man of the Ikires tribe, Butu, was a son-in-law here, then he also came."

Thus, we know that Botu was actually an uxori-local son-in-law of Chinggis Khan.

⁶ *YS* 1:11. See the basic annals of Taizu. "(When they withdrew) to Banzhuni River, the river water was muddy. The Emperor (Chinggis Khan) drank it and swore an oath before his troops. A man of the Ikires tribe, Botu, had just been defeated by the Huolula tribe, and he met with the Emperor and swore to make an alliance."

⁷ *XYS* 114:522. *MWESJ* 23:8.

for three years.⁸ Botu was posthumously titled as the Prince of the State of Chang and many other honorable titles were bestowed upon him in the reign of Chengzong.⁹

Rashid Al-din offers only a brief account about the Ikires tribe in *Jāmi‘ al-Tawarikh*. In “Beginning of the History of Möngke Qa’an” in *The Successors*, Al-din mentions a man named Derekei Küregen of the Ikires people, who was a son-in-law of Chinggis Khan. In a *quriltai* in 1251, he suggested that Möngke, who was the newly elected Khan, launch a campaign to conquer the Southern Song, saying, “The kingdom of Nangiyas is so near and they are hostile to us. How can we neglect and delay [our attack]?”¹⁰ In the footnote Boyle writes, “Or Dayirkei. He was a *Küregen* (“imperial son-in-law”), being the husband of Chinggis Khan’s daughter Tümelün.” Boyle, however, is mistaken in his view that Derekei was the husband of Tümelün. As we mentioned above, Tümelün’s husband was Botu, and when Tümelün died, Botu married Huochen Beki, the daughter of Chinggis Khan. He died in 1227 and thus he could not possibly have been able to attend the *quriltai* election of Möngke Khan in 1251. I believe that Derekei was the son of Botu, whose name in Chinese is Tieligan. In the Table of Princesses his name was mistakenly written as Tiejiangan.¹¹

Derekei married two princesses. One was Yiqiliesi; the other was Chalun. Both of them were titled Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang.

According to Al-din, Derekei was a chief Brigade Commander (*Tümen*), and played an important role in Mongol military campaigns and political struggles. He was one of the military generals in the campaign that conquered the Southern Song, and also actively involved himself in the campaigns for the throne between Khubilai and Arigh Böke, leading his troops to fight the army of Arigh Böke.¹² However, in the biography of Botu, his activities were omitted. Moreover, the *Yuanshi* recorded that it was his son Suorha, who was the chief of *Tümen* and who participated in the campaign against the Southern Song. Thus, there are still some unexplained historical areas that need to be clarified. I will leave them for future investigations.

⁸ Zhang Shiguan, “*Fuma Changwang shide be,i*, YWL 25:301.

⁹ YS 118:2922.

¹⁰ The Successors, 6:223-4.

¹¹ The annotators of *Yuanshi* believe that his name should be Tieligan which appears in other Chinese sources including the *Tongzhi tiaoge* [Code of Comprehensive Institutions]. See YS 109:2764.

¹² The Successors, 6:252, 256.

Marriages Between Ikires Tribe and Chinggisid Clan

According to the *Yuanshi*, Botu's son Suorha was promoted to the position of chief of Brigade Commanders during Ögödei's reign (1229-1241). He took part in the campaign against Shu, and captured Jiazhou of the Southern Song and died on the return journey. He had married Princess Antu, the daughter of Kuochu (son of Ögödei), and Princess Buhaihan (father unknown).¹³ The daughter of Princess Antu became the Empress of Möngke Khan.¹⁴

Zhawu-Erchen, the son of Suorha, took part in the campaign against the Puxian-Wannu under the command of Güyük during Ögödei's reign, where he rendered meritorious service. Ögödei Khan allowed him to marry Princess Yesunzhen, the daughter of Prince Anchidai. Zhawu-Erchen was posthumously titled "Prince of the State of Chang."¹⁵

Zhawu-Erchen had two sons. The eldest was Yuelietai who married Princess Hadahan, the daughter of Prince Saiyinzhubu,¹⁶ and gave birth to a son named Tuobietai. Yuelietai took part in the campaign to pacify the rebel prince Naiyan in the northwest in the year 1286 and distinguished himself in action.

The younger son of Zhawu-Erchen was Hulian who married Princess Boyaluhan, the daughter of Möngke Khan. During Khubilai's reign, Hulian also played an important role in suppressing the rebel princes. Following a great victory over the rebellious princes, Khubilai allowed Hulian to marry Princess Bulanxi, the granddaughter of Möngke Khan, as a reward.¹⁷ After the southern Song was conquered, Hulian was granted the district of Guangzhou as his fief. Hulian was posthumously titled Prince of the State of Chang.

Ashi, the son of Hulian, served Chengzong (r.1295-1307), and in 1301, participated in the campaign to suppress the rebellious princes in the northwest under the command of the Prince of Jin Kammala (Chengzong's

¹³ The two princesses probably married Suorha one after the other when one died, but we do not know who was the second wife.

¹⁴ *YS* 118: 2922.

¹⁵ *YS* 118: 2922.

¹⁶ Saiyinzhubu is not listed in the "Tables of Princes" of the *Yuanshi* (108: 2735-49). We do not know which Emperor's son he was. Nor was Hadahan recorded in the "Table of Princesses."

¹⁷ It might be that Bulanxi married Hulian as a second wife when Boyaluhan died. But the *Yuanshi* does not state clearly if Boyaluhan had died when Hulian married Bulanxi. Therefore it is also possible that Hulian had two princesses as his wives at the same time. "The Emperor (Khubilai) highly commended him and again ordered him to marry Princess Bulanxi." (*YS* 118:2922)

younger brother) and Qaishan (Chengzong’s nephew). In a battle in 1302, Ashi wounded the rebellious prince Du’a, the khan of the Chaghatai Khanate, and killed many of his followers. To commend his deeds, Chengzong granted him a suit of pear clothes, and married him to princess Yilihaiya, his daughter. Yilihaiya gave birth to two daughters. The eldest one was Sugebala who later became the principal Empress of Yingzong, and the other was Yilianzhenbala who later became the principal Empress of Emperor Taiding.¹⁸ Ashi also married princess Maidi, whose father is unknown. After Qaishan succeeded to the throne, Ashi was awarded the title of *Brigade Commander*, was granted a gold seal, and titled “Prince of the State of Chang.” In addition, he was permitted to set up his own princely mansion and independent government.¹⁹

Ashi had seven sons. The eldest son Balashili inherited the title of Prince of Chang. After Balashili died, his son Shalanduoer inherited the title.

In addition, Hulian’s cousin Buhua married Khubilai’s daughter, Princess Wuluzhen, and Hulian’s brother Suolangha married Princess Nuwulun, Khubilai’s granddaughter. The daughter of Nuwulun became the Empress of Wuzong and gave birth to Mingzong.

Zhang Shiguan in the “*Fuma Changwang shide bei*” (tablet of the hereditary merits and virtues of the Imperial Sons-in-law, Princes of the State of Chang) makes the following remarks, “[The men in this family] were titled princes and married princesses for generations. Their privilege was no less than that of the Yuan family and the Deng family in the Han dynasty. But their celebrity and accomplishments were greater than those of the Yuan and Deng.”²⁰

¹⁸ Zhang Shiguan “*Fuma Changwang shide bei*,” in YWL 25: 300-302. But according to the *Yuanshi*-“*Houfei Zhuan*,” Yilianzhenbala was not the principal empress. Her name is recorded in the “*Houfei Biao*,” but she does not have a biography.

¹⁹ Zhang Shiguan, “*Fuma Changwang shide bei*.”

²⁰ YWL, *juan* 25:302.

TABLE 5: *The Empresses of Yuan from the Ikires Tribe*

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Hutuheitai (Qutuqtai)		Möngke (Xianzong)	Suorha (Botu's son) ²¹
Shou Tong ²² [Mingzong's mother]	<i>Renxianzhangsheng</i>	Khaishan (Wuzong)	Suolangha (Hulian's younger brother)
Sugebala	<i>Zhuangjingyisheng</i>	Shidebala (Yingzong)	Ashi
Yilianzhenbala		Yisün Temür (Emperor Taiding)	Ashi

TABLE 6: *Princesses of the Yuan Court Married into the Ikires Tribe*

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Tiemulun	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Botu	Yesugai (Lieu)
Huochenbieji	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Botu	Chinggis Khan (Taizu)
Yiqilies	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Tieligan/Tiejiangan (Botu's son)	? Chinggis Khan
Cha Lun	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Tieligan/Tiejiangan	?
Antu (mother of Xianzong's Empress)	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Suorha (Botu's son, Prince of Chang)	Kuochu (Taizong's son)
Buhaihan		Suorha	?
Yesunzhen	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Zhahuerchen (Suorha's son, Prince of Cahng)	Anchitai (?son of Hechiwen, Prince of Ji'nan)

²¹ According to the *Yuanshi*, Suorha married Ögödei's great-granddaughter, Princess Antu. Their daughter was the empress of Möngke Khan. The *Yuanshi* does not mention the princess' name. Rashid Al-din says that her name was Hutuheitai. Her father was Uuladai (also Botu's son). See *The Successors*, 6: 197.

²² *Yuanshi*-“*Gongzhu Biao*” does not record her name. She is called “*Feizi Yiqilie Shi*”. Mao Yuesheng includes her name in *Yuanshi houfei gongzhu zhuan bu*, but he presents two names: “Shoutong” and “Shouzhang.” See *Yuanshi houfei gongzhu zhuan bu Bu*, P.19. Tu Ji believes that her name was Shoutong. See *MWESJ* 19:14.

Hadahan		Yuelietai (Zhahuerchen's elder son)	Saiyinzhubu (?Ögödei's son)
Boyaluhan	Grand and Senior Princess of the State of Chang	Hulian (Zhahuerchen's younger son, Prince of Chang)	Möngke Khan
Bulanxi (Xianzong's granddaughter)	Grand and Senior Princess of the State of Chang	Hulian	?
Yilihaiya (mother of the Empresses of Yingzong and Emperor Taiding)	Grand and Senior Princess of the State of Chang	Ashi (Hulian's son,,Prince of Chang)	Temür Öljeitü (Chenzong)
Maidi (Xianzong's great granddaughter)	Princess-Supreme of the State of Chang	Ashi	?
Wuluzhen		Buhua (Hulian's younger cousin,Tiemugan 's son)	Khubilai Khan
Nuwulun (mother of Wuzong's Empress of Renxian Zhangsheng who was Mingzong's mother)		Suolangha (Buhua's younger brother)	Manggela (Renzong's son, Prince of Anxi)
Luluhan		Suoduge (Buhua's younger brother, Prince of Ning Chang)	?
Lulun		Suoduge	?
Puyankelimeisi		Bulianjidai (Suoduge's son, Prince of Ning Chang)	?
Yanheya	Princess-Supreme of the state of Chang	Balashili (Prince of Chang)	?
Yuelu	Princess-Supreme of the state of Chang	Shalanduor	Khoshila (Mingzong)

MARRIAGE LIST 3: *Males of the Mongol Royal Family Married into the Ikires Tribe*

1. Möngke 蒙哥 (r.1251-1259)(1) Hutuheitai
2. Khaishan Khan 海山 (r. 1308-1311)(2) Shoutong
3. Shidebala 碩德八剌(r.1321-1323).....(3) Sugebala
4. Yisün Temür 也孫鉄木兒 (r.1324-1328)(4) Yilianzhenbala.

MARRIAGE LIST 4: *Males of the Ikires Tribe Married into the Mongol Royal Family*

1. Botu.....(1) Tiemulun, (2) Huochenbieji
2. Tiejiangan(3) Yiqiliesi, (4) Chalun.
3. Suorha(5) Antu, (6) Buhaihan
4. Zhahuerchen.....(7) Yesunzhen
5. Yuelietai.....(8) Hadahan
6. Hulian.....(9) Boyaluhan (10) Bulanxi
7. Ashi.....(11)Yilihaiya (12) Maidi
8. Buhua(13) Wuluzhen
9. Suolangha.....(14) Nuwulun
10. Suoduge(15) Luluhan (16) Lulun
11. Bulianjidai.....(17) Puyankelimeisi
12. Balashili(18) Yanheya
13. Shalanduor(19) Yuelu

CHAPTER EIGHT

“Two-way” Marriages: Marriages Between the Mongolian Royal Family and the Oirat Tribe

Historical Background

The Oirat tribe was one of the most powerful tribes of the “people in the forest”. They lived at the head of the Deleger River and the Yenisei River,¹ and according to Rashid Al-din, they “had a large population, and were divided into many sub-tribes, each of these had a specific name.”²

In the early period, the Oirat tribe was antagonistic to Chinggis Khan when he attempted to unify the Mongol steppes, and in 1201, the chief of the Oirat tribe, Khudugha Beki, together with nine tribal chiefs, elected Jamuka as Gür-khan.³ They allied their forces to attack Chinggis Khan and Ong-Khan’s troops, with Oirat people led by Khudugha Beki, as the vanguards of the united army, and the decisive battle occurred at the place called Kōyitien. According to *The Secret History*, Khudugha Beki and the Buyirug Khan of the Naiman state had the ability to summon wind and rain, but after they performed their magic arts, the wind and rain surprisingly turned upon their own army. Suddenly it became dark everywhere, and the battlefield became very muddy, so that the united army of Jamuka was consequently defeated.⁴ In 1204, Khudugha Beki formed another alliance with the Naiman people against Chinggis Khan, but again they were defeated.⁵

In 1207, after having conquered many tribes including the Tartar, Merkit, Kereit, and Naiman, Chinggis Khan sent his elite troops (*you shou jun*), commanded by his eldest son Jochi, to conquer the “people in the forest.” Surprisingly, Khudugha Beki surrendered without resistance,⁶

¹ Bai Cuiqin, “Wala jingyu bianqian kaoshu,” in *Menggushi yanjiu*, No. 1, Zhongguo Menggushi Xuehui, (1985): 35-51.

² *Shiji*, vol. 1a:193.

³ I.e. “Ruler of all.” *The Secret History*, p. 68. Fn. 29.

⁴ *The Secret History*, p. 69.

⁵ YS 1: 12-13. See the basic annals of Taizu.

⁶ MGMS/Daorun Tibu, Neimenggu Renmin Chubanshe. (1991): 269. *The Secret History*. ch. 10, p. 173.

realizing perhaps that his tribe alone was unable to resist the powerful troops of Chinggis Khan. Not only did he choose to surrender, but he also guided Jochi's troops to the north, where seven other Oirat sub-tribes were forced to surrender. Chinggis Khan was very pleased by the behavior of Khudugha Beki whose submission set an example for other tribes to follow, since as a result, the casualties of the Mongol troops were greatly reduced. As a reward, Chinggis decided to marry his own daughter and his granddaughter (Jochi's daughter) to the two sons of Khudugha Beki.⁷ This formally established the marriage relationship between Chinggis' family and the Oirat nobles. In 1217, when Chinggis conquered the Tumad tribe, he granted the concubine of the chief of Tumad tribe to Qudugha Beki,⁸ and in addition, he bestowed great honors and power upon the Oirat nobles. He granted a title of "[lords of] four thousand households" (*si qian hu*) to the nobles of the Oirat tribe.

The successors of Chinggis also valued greatly their relationship with the Oirat tribe. In addition to rewarding them with high-ranking official titles, they also took women from the Oirat tribe, and married their daughters to the nobles of this tribe. In his discussion of the reason why the Princes took wives from the Oirat tribe, Juvaini writes:

The Oirat tribe are one of the best known of the Mongol tribes, and to that tribe belong most of the maternal uncles of the children and grand-children of Chingiz-Khan, the reason being that at the time of his rise to power the Oirat came forward to support and assist him and vied with one another in their alacrity to tender allegiance, and in recognition of their services an edict was issued concerning that tribe to the effect that the daughters of their emirs should be married to the descendants of Chingiz-Khan; and he likewise bestowed upon the chief of that tribe a daughter of his own called Checheken Beki.⁹

According to Rashid Al-Din, Oirat women were well-known for their beauty. Therefore the Mongol Khans and nobles frequently selected girls from this tribe.¹⁰

⁷ MGMS/Daorun-Tibu, p. 269. *The Secret History*, p. 173.

⁸ MGMS/Daorun-Tibu, p. 270. *The Secret History*, p. 175.

⁹ *World Conqueror*, Part Two, XXX, pp. 505-6.

¹⁰ According to Al-din, Ögödei Khan had perpetrated an outrage on the Oirats. "A rumor once sprang up amongst the Mongol tribe of Oirat that in accordance with a decree the daughters of that tribe were to be affianced to a certain group of people. In fear they affianced most of their daughters to husbands within the tribe, and some they actually delivered up to them. News of this reached Qa'an's ear, and he investigated the matter. It being just as had been reported, orders were given to gather all the girls of that tribe over seven years of age and to take back all who had been given that year to their husbands. Four thousand girls were thus assembled. He ordered those who were daughters of emirs to be separated from the rest and made a *yasa* that all who were present should have

Chinggis Khan’s original purpose was apparently to use marriage as a means to form a military alliance with the Oirat tribe, and to a degree, was successful in this regard. The Oirat nobles also realized the inevitability of Chinggis’ rise, and were thus eager to take advantage of this relationship to raise their own political position and to realize economic gains in the Mongol Empire. Therefore, this kind of marriage relationship, like the other Mongol imperial marriages in the twelfth and thirteen centuries, was both militarily and politically significant. Military and political considerations both prompted Chinggis and his descendants to establish and maintain marriage relationships with the Oirat tribe.

Mongol Princesses Married into the Oirat Tribe

Many nobles of the Oirat tribe married Mongol Princesses, and many Oirat women married Mongol Princes, in a bilateral marriage relationship. The record of these marriages in the *Yuanshi* are however very regrettably incomplete, and the “Tables of Princesses” in the *Yuanshi* records only six Mongol Princesses who were married into the Oirat tribe. There are, however, scattered records found in Chinese, Mongolian, and Persian source materials, and, in the following, we will adopt a slightly different approach by piecing together fragments of information found in these languages in order to draw a complete as possible picture of these marriage relationships.

1. Princess Checheyigen and Törölchi (or Inalchi)

Princess Checheyigen was the second daughter of Chinggis Khan, and Törölchi was the eldest son of Khudugha Beki, but the identity of the person to whom Princess Checheyigen married is controversial.

There are two different versions. One is found in *The Secret History*, according to which, Checheyigen was married to Inalchi, the second son of

intercourse with them. Two of the girls expired. As for the rest, he drew them up in two rows. Those who were worthy of the ordo he dispatched to the harem, some he gave to the cheetah-keepers and falconers, and some to the various attendants at Court; others again he sent to the brothel and the hostel for ambassadors. As for those that still remained, he ordered all present, whether Mongols or Muslims, to carry them off whilst their brothers, husbands, and kinsmen looked on not daring to breathe.” *The Successors*, 1: 93-4. Juvaini recorded exactly the same event in *The History of the World-Conqueror*, part one, XXXII, pp. 233-4. These records were confirmed by Chinese sources which says that it happened in 1237. “On the Dingyou day of the sixth month of the ninth year [of Ögödei Khan’s reign] (1237), a rumor sprang up among the opposing tribes that the girls of the common people were to be collected. The Emperor was angry, and therefore actually collected [the girls] and granted them to his subordinates.” YS 2:35.

Khudugha Beki: “(Chinggis Khan) went to meet Khudugha Beki of the Oirat, saying, ‘He is come, aforetime submitting himself and leading [hither] his ten thousand Oirat,’ he favored [him] and gave Chechegen unto his son, unto Inalchi. He gave Holuiqan daughter of Jochi, unto Törölchi, elder brother of Inalchi.”¹¹ This very clear record was adopted by many scholars in Yuan studies, such as Qian Daxin in *Yuanshi shizubiao*, Wei Yuan in *Yuanshi xinbian*, Hong Jun in *Yuanshi yiwen zhengbu*, Tu Ji in *Mengwuer shiji*, and He Shaomin in *Xin Yuanshi*. At the same time, it seems to me that it would have been more reasonable if Chinggis Khan had married his own daughter to the elder son of Khudugha Beki. Moreover, this record is not compatible with the record in *Yuanshi*.

The other record is found in Rashid Al-din. In two passages in his accounts, he records that Princess Checheyigen was married to Törölchi.¹² This has been confirmed by *Yuanshi*—“Table of Princesses”. Under the Yan’an Gongzhu Wei, it says: “Princess Kuokuogan married *Küregen* Tuo Yihe Luan chi.”¹³ Tu Ji changed “Kuokuogan” to “Checheyijian,”¹⁴ and the Tuoluanchi in the *Yuanshi* is Törölchi. In addition, Juvaini mentions the Princes, *noyan*, and imperial sons-in-law who followed Hülegü on the westward expedition in 1252-3, “from Checheken Beki, Buqa-Temür with an army of Oirat tribesmen.”¹⁵ Buqa-Temür was the son of Törölchi.¹⁶

According to Al-din, Checheyigen and Törölchi had three sons and either two or four daughters. The three sons were Buqa-Temür, Burtua, and Pars-buqa.¹⁷ There are two different records about the number of Törölchi’s daughters in Al-din’s book. One tells us that he had two daughters, El-Chiqmish Khatun, who was the senior wife of Arigh Böko, and Orqina (Wulu-hunai in *Yuanshi*). She married Qara-Hülegü, the grandson of Chaghatai, and ruled the Chaghatai state after her husband died.¹⁸ This version contends that Buqa-Temür had four sisters. They were Kubak

¹¹ *The Secret History*, p. 173. MGMS/Daorun-Tibu, *juan* 10. p. 269.

¹² Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi’ al-Tawarikh (Shiji)*, vol. 1a: 194. “Chenggis Khan married his own daughter Jijakan to this *gurgan* Turalji.”; vol. 1b, p. 88: “[Chinggis Khan’s] second daughter Jijakan was married to *gurgan* Turalji of the son of Khudugha Beiki, the chief of the Oirat tribe.”

¹³ YS 109:2762.

¹⁴ Tu Ji says, “Originally it is Kuokuogan. It’s not a correct transliteration. Besides, Cheche means flower and Kuokuo means green in Mongolian language, since their meanings are different, and pronunciations are not similar to each other, it must be a mistake in *Yuanshi*.” See MWESJ 151:7.

¹⁵ *World Conqueror*, Part three, VI, p. 608.

¹⁶ Rashid Al-din, *Shiji*, vol. 1a:194.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *World-Conqueror*, p. 274.

Khatun, who was the first wife of Hülegü; Orqina (Aurgneh) Khatun, who was the wife of Qara-Hülegü; Huchu Khatun, who married Tuohan, the second son of Batu (Jochi’s son); and Öljei Khatun, who was the wife of Hülegü. Al-din believed that the latter was correct.¹⁹

2. Princess Holuiqan (Huolu) and Inalchi

The other transliterations of Holuiqan are Huolu, Huolei, and Qului-aikaji. They refer to the same person, the daughter of Jochi and the sister of Batu. *The Secret History* reveals that she married Törölchi, the younger brother of Inalchi. The record of the Table of Princesses in *Yuanshi* reads, “Princess Huolu married Hada Küregen.” Hada was believed to be Törölchi in both the *Xin Yuanshi* and the *Yuanshi Xin Bian*. However, Tu Ji claims that this person should be Hedai *küregen*, a general of Chinggis Khan,²⁰ but according to Al-din, “The story of the above Inalchi, the other son of Khudugha Beki is as follows: Batu married his sister Qului-aikaji to him. She bore a son named Auldu, who had two sons named Niktai and Aqu-Temür. They were in the *ulus* of Qunji (the great grandson of Batu), commanding an army of four thousand for Zhalayir.”²¹ The Table of Yearly Grants (“*Shihuo Zhi-Sui Cǐ*”) in the *Yuanshi* has records of the yearly grants to Princess Huolei. In 1236 (the eighth year of Taizong), 9,796 households were granted to the Prefecture of Yan’an in her name. In 1319 (the sixth year of Yanyou), she actually governed 1809 households, which supplied her with 722 *jin* of silk annually.²²

3. Princess Tuotuohui and Tumandar

In the Table of Princesses in the *Yuanshi*, under the name of Princess Yan’an, it reads, “Princess Tuotuohui 禿滿答兒, the granddaughter of Shizu (Khubilai), married Tumandar *fuma*.” The identity of Tumandar, however, is not clear. The biography of Anbo in the *Yuanshi* records the story of a person named Tumandar 禿綿答兒. In 1287 (the twenty-fourth year of the Zhiyuan era) when Naiyan rebelled against Khubilai, Tumandar supported the rebellion of Prince Halu and was later killed. “And Prince Halu and *fuma* Tumandar rebelled. Anbo led troops to battle them at the place named Keliusu Shibatu. He stabbed Tumandar and killed him.”²³ In the Table of the Princesses in the *Yuanshi*, there is only one person named Tumandar--an

¹⁹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:195.

²⁰ *MWESJ* 151: 7.

²¹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a, p. 195.

²² *YS* 95:2427. See *Shihuo zhi-sui ci*.

²³ *YS* 133: 3237.

imperial son-in-law. Bai Cuiqin assumes that they were probably the same person.²⁴

In the Table of Princesses in the *Yuanshi*, under the heading of “All the other Princesses” we find, “Princess-Supreme Tuotuohui was the granddaughter of Shizu.” Since they were all granddaughters of Khubilai, and their pronunciations are identical, although the Chinese characters are different, it is highly possible that they refer to the same person.

Tu Ji believes that Tuotuo Hui and Tuotuohui are the same person.²⁵ The basic annals of Shundi in the *Yuanshi* record that in 1334 (the second year of Yuan tong), “[Shundi] granted the title of Princess of Yingshou to the imperial aunt Tuotuohui.”²⁶ Shundi was the grandson of Khaishan (Wuzong), and his aunt should therefore have been the daughter of Khaishan instead of Khubilai. However, if Tumantar and Tumiandar are the same person, then Tuotuohui should be the daughter of Khubilai.

4. Princess Yixiji and Balituo

Neither of these names can be found in either the Tables of Princes or the Table of Princesses in the *Yuanshi*, but they appear in the inscription on a tablet known as “*Shijiayuan bei*” discovered by the archeologists of People’s Republic of Mongolia in 1953. The inscription is in both Mongolian and Chinese, and is both a prayer and a congratulation on the birthday of Möngke Khan by Imperial son-in-law Balituo and Princess Yixiji in the year 1257.

In the *Yuanshi*, we also find the name of someone named Balitu 八里土. The pronunciation is very similar to Balituo 八里托.

In the spring of the seventh year *dingsi* (1257), Möngke went to Hulanyerji. He ordered all the Princes to dispatch troops to conquer the Song...In the winter, the Emperor passed the south of the desert and arrived at Yulongzhan. Khubilai, Balitu, Chumuhar, Yulongdashi, Xilieji, and Princess Tuomiekhan came to meet him, and they had a great banquet. Then everybody was sent to his own army.²⁷

However, Tu Ji believes that the name Balitu in this document should be the eldest son of Möngke Khan, whose name was Bantu 班秃.²⁸

Fortunately, Al-din provides us with important clues about the family background of Balituo in *Jāmi‘ al-Tawarikh*. “Chinggis Khan had married a girl in his clan to this Burtua, her name and seniority are not clear,

²⁴ Bai Cuiqin, “Woyila guizu yu Chengjisihanxi lianyin kaoshu”, *Minzu yanjiu*, 1 (1984): 49.

²⁵ MWESJ 151:7.

²⁶ YS 38:820.

²⁷ YS 3:50.

²⁸ MWESJ 6:10. See the basic annals of Möngke Khan.

[therefore] Burtua became the Emperor’s son-in-law.”²⁹ The pronunciations of Burtua and Balituo are similar, and they lived during the same period, therefore Bai Cuiqin maintains that Balituo was very likely the grandson of Khudugha Beki. And Yixiji must have been the woman from Chinggis Khan’s clan.³⁰ According to Al-din, Burtua was known as being weak in personality. He had two sons, Auluq and Hin, both of whom became officials in the reign of Khubilai Khan.³¹

5. Princess Ile-Temür (Yantiemur) and Pars buqa

Ile-Temür Yantiemur was the daughter of Tolui and Lingqun Khatun, She married Pars-buqa, the third son of Törölchi.³² According to Rashid Al-din, “when Lingqun Khatun died, she left a daughter named Ile-Temür who married Pars-buqa *Küregen*.”³³

6. An Unknown Princess and Biklamish (Bielimishi)

This Princess’ name was omitted in the “Table of Princesses” in the *Yuanshi*, which merely indicates that a certain Princess was married to the imperial son-in-law Bielimishi 別里迷失.³⁴ Biklamish was the great-grandson of Khudugha Beki and the son of Parsbuqa. Rashid Al-din points out that Parsbuqa had two sons. One was called Shirap; the other was called Biklamish. They both served Khubilai Khan at his palace as his attendants.³⁵

7. An Unknown Princess and Shirap

This Princess’ name was left blank in the “Table of Princesses” in the *Yuanshi* which says simply that “She was married to the imperial son-in-law Shalan.” Shalan, according to Bai Cuiqin, was Shirap, who was mentioned in Al-din’s book.³⁶ He was the son of Parsbuqa, the brother of Biklamish. He was employed in the Yuan palace.

²⁹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 195.

³⁰ Bai Cuiqin, “Woyila guizu yu chengjisihanxi lianyin kaoshu,” *Minzu yanjiu*, 1 (1984): 50.

³¹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:194-5.

³² Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi‘ al-Tawārīkh*, Russian version, trans. By Y. P. Verkhovsky, 1960. Quoted in Bai Cuiqin, “Woyila guizu yu chengjisihanxi lianyin kaoshu,” *Minzu yanjiu*, 1 (1984): 50.

³³ Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi‘ al-Tawārīkh (Shiji)*, vol. II, p. 368.

³⁴ YS 109:2762.

³⁵ *Shiji*, 1a, p. 195.

³⁶ Bai Cuiqin, “Woyila guizu yu chengjisihanxi lianyin kaoshu,” *Minzu yanjiu*, 1 (1984): 50.

8. The Princess of Yan'an and the Prince of Yan'an ebugan

“Yan'an” is obviously a title representing the name of the fief as well as a Princess, though there is no record about the origin of this Princess. The “Table of Princesses” in the *Yuanshi* tell us that the Princess of Yan'an married the Prince of Yan'an, Yebugan.³⁷ As far as we know, Yebugan was a noble of the Oirat tribe, who, according to Bai Cuiqin, was probably the descendant of Princess Holuiqan (Huolu) and Inalchi since he inherited the fief and the title of Prince of Yan'an. A notice in the basic annals of Ningzong's reign in the *Yuanshi* says that in 1332 (the third year of Zhishun), “[The Emperor] made an award to Huantehachi, the son of the imperial son-in-law Yebugan, of gold, silver, and cloth in different amounts.”³⁸

9. Numugan and Junan

According to Al-din, Numugan was the daughter of Arigh Böke and Hutuheita Khatun, and Junan was the eldest son of Buqa-Temür, the son of Törölchi.³⁹

10. Emegen and Toq-Temür

According to Rashid Al-din, Emegen was the daughter of Melik-Temür, the second son of Arigh Böke; Toq-Temür was the grandson of Pars-Buqa and the great-grandson of Törölchi.⁴⁰

11. A Princess and Tanggis (Tengjisi)

This Princess seems to have been the daughter of Güyük Khan, though her name was not recorded in the *Yuanshi*. Tanggis *Küregen* was the chief of the Oirat tribe, and according to Rashid Al-din,

Among the *güragan* commanders who are related to the chief of the Oyirat tribe, Qutuqa Beki, one was the Tanggiz *güragan* to whom Güyük Khan gave a daughter, and he served as a son-in-law. When Güyük Khan died and Möngke Khan became ruler, Güyük Khan's family and some officers plotted a mutiny, but he had the officers executed. Tanggiz *güragan* was also accused, and he was so beaten that the

³⁷ YS 109:2762.

³⁸ YS 37:810.

³⁹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:194. vol II, p. 366. “She (Hutuheita Khatun) lives in the yurt of Sorghaghtani-Beki. He (Arigh Böke) and she gave birth to a daughter named Qamty who has not been married. The other daughter was named Numugan. She was married to Chuban *küregen*.” Junan and Chuban were probably the same person.

⁴⁰ *The Successors*. 7:313.

flesh fell from his thighs. After that, the girl who was his wife asked for his life to be spared, and he was spared for her sake.⁴¹

12. Tödögach and Tanggis

Tödögach was the fourth daughter of Hülegü Khan. According to Al-din, she was initially married to the Oirat chief, Tanggis. After Tanggis died, she married his son Sulamish, and later, she also married Chechak, the son of Sulamish.⁴² The *Jāmi‘ al-Tawarikh* also reads: “Hülegü Khan’s daughter, Tödögach, who was married to Tanggis Küregen, is at this time married to his grandson Chechak *küregen*, and they have had children.”⁴³ This seems to be a discrepancy in the records of *Jāmi‘ al-Tawarikh*, since it is hard to imagine that a woman could marry her great grandson and bear children to him. Bai Cuiqin also doubts these levirate marriages, since the age span of four generations seems simply too great.⁴⁴

13. Mankku-lukan and Jaqir

Mankku-lukan was the third daughter of Hülegü Khan, while Jaqir was the son of Buqa-Temür, and the grandson of Törölchi. He and his son Tarqai were both Battalion Commanders (*qianhu zhang*) of the Oirat tribe. In 1253, his father Buqa-Temür commanded an Oirat troop to conquer Persia under the command of Hülegü, and we are told that his two aunts, Öljei Khatun and Guyuk Khatun, married Hülegü. According to Al-din, Jaqir married Mankku-lukan, the third daughter of Hülegü Khan,⁴⁵ but in his accounts of the history of the Oirat tribe, Al-din contradicts himself, offering a different version, saying that the Princess was married to Jaqir’s son. “Tarqai married Hülegü Khan’s daughter Mankku-lukan. After she died, he married Mengü-Temür’s daughter Ara-Khutluq.”⁴⁶ Since Jaqir was called *gurgen* (imperial son-in-law), he must have married a Princess, and it is also probable that this was a levirate marriage and Tarqai married his father’s widow.

14. Araqutluq and Tarqai

Araqutluq was the daughter of Möngke-Temür and the granddaughter of Hülegü. According to Al-din, Tarqai first married Mankku-lukan, the

⁴¹ Rashid Al-din, *Jāmi‘ al-Tawarikh Compendium of Chronicles, A History of the Mongols*, trans. W. M. Thackston, Harvard University, pt. One, (1998): 56.

⁴² *Shiji*, vol. III:27.

⁴³ Op. cit., 56.

⁴⁴ Bai Cuiqin, “Woyila guizu yu Chengjisihanxi lianyin kaoshu”, *Minzu yanjiu*, 1 (1984): 51.

⁴⁵ *Shiji*, vol. III:26.

⁴⁶ Op. cit., vol. 1a:196.

daughter of Hūlegü, and then married Araqutluq, the niece of Hūlegü.⁴⁷ At the same time, the biography of Hūlegü Khan states that Mankku-lukan married Tarqai's father, so that Tarqai was the son-in-law of Mengü-Temür because he married Araqutluq. One possibility is that Tarqai first married his stepmother Mankku-lukan, and then married Araqutluq.

During the reign of Ghazan Khan in Persia, Tarqai led the Oirat troops to defend the city of Baghdad, but they rebelled and fled to Syria in 1296. According to D'Ohsson,

When Ghazan Khan's troop revolted and attempted to enthrone a new Khan, the Oirat army that was guarding Baghdad also rebelled and ran to Syria. Because their commander of the ten thousand households, Tarqai *Gürgen* joined Bodu and attacked the Qihe tribe, Ghazan decided to kill him, and he ordered Mulai, the newly appointed commander at Diyar-Biker to command troops to surround Tarqai, and dispatched eighty cavalymen to arrest the other Oirat high-ranking military officers. However, the Oirat people killed the envoys and the cavalymen. They then crossed the Efurat River and went westward to Syria for shelter. Mulai commanded his ten thousand troops to pursue the Oirat people, but many of his troops were killed by them. About eighteen thousand households from this tribe ran away.⁴⁸

In the end, the Oirat troops were defeated and many were killed. "His (Tarqai's) troops were captured and were dispersed."⁴⁹ As refugee and heretics, they were rejected by the local people and not allowed to enter any Syrian city, so that many of them died. D'Ohsson writes, "Their children were pretty, and the local people liked them, therefore many generals, solders, and other people in Syria adopted their sons and married their daughters. As for their solders, they were distributed to Syrian military units. Later they became Muslims and they were no different from other people."⁵⁰

15. Two Princesses and Nauruz and Lakzi

Nauruz and Lakzi were the sons of Arghun-aqa, who was the emir of the Oirat tribe. He was of a very humble family background, and initially was a member of the *keshik* in Ögödei Khan's *ordu*. Later he was promoted to the high position of Basqaq, governing the whole territory of Iran. "His sons Nauruz and Lakzi married the women of Chinggis Khan's family."⁵¹ But the names and origins of these women are unknown.

⁴⁷ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:196.

⁴⁸ D'Ohsson, *Historie des Mongols, Duosang Menggushi*, trans, Feng Chengjun. Taipei, Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1963, vol. II, Ch. 6, p. 56-57.

⁴⁹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:196.

⁵⁰ D'Ohsson, op. cit, pp. 56-57.

⁵¹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:198.

Oirat Women Married into the Chinggisid Clan

Although the Oirat tribe did not enjoy the special honor given to the Onggirat tribe, approximately eleven Oirat women married Mongol khans or Princes. The following discusses these marriages.

1. Oghul Ghaimish and Möngke Khan (or Güyük Khan?)

The records of Oghul Ghaimish are controversial. Bai Cuiqin's studies suggest three different views. One is represented by Rashid al-Din, who recorded the existence of two Oghul Ghaimish. One was the daughter of Khudugha Beki, the chief of the Oirat tribe, who was married to Möngke Khan. The other was from the Merkit tribe, and was the Empress of Güyük. Rashid Al-din informs us that the chief of the Oirat tribe, Khudugha Beki, had two sons, Inalchi and Törölchi, and a daughter named Agul-quimish, who was married to Möngke Khan. Initially Chinggis Khan planned to marry her, but the marriage never occurred.⁵² Rashid al-Din holds that although she was the sister-in-law of Khubilai Khan and Hülegü Khan, she always called them her sons, and they showed much respect toward her.⁵³ However, in the basic annals of Möngke Khan, Al-Din states, on the contrary, that Möngke Khan also had a principal wife from the Oirat tribe, whose name was Oghul-Qoimish, and she was the sister of Öljei Khatun.⁵⁴ This woman was apparently very talented, and because she was initially betrothed to Tolui, she called her husband's brothers, Khublilai Khan and Hülegü Khan, her sons, though she did not herself have sons, but two daughters.⁵⁵ Although the transliterations of the names are slightly different in these two places in Al-din's book, there is no doubt that they refer to the same person. The only difference is that according to the “Tribal Histories” in *Jami'al-Tawarikh*, Chinggis Khan originally intended to marry her, but eventually she married his grandson Möngke Khan.

According to the basic annals of Möngke Khan, however, she was betrothed to Tolui initially and later married Möngke instead, and that was why she called Khubilai and Hülegü her children. In addition, she was not the sister of Öljei Khatun, but rather, she was the aunt of Öljei Khatun. Al-

⁵² *The Successors*, 6:198. Also see *Shiji*, vol. II, p. 233.

⁵³ *Shiji*, vol. I:194.

⁵⁴ According to Boyle, “Öljei Khatun, one of the wives of Hülegü, was actually Oghul-Qoimish's grand-niece.” See Khetagurov, p. 119 and *The Successors*. 6:198, fn.11.

⁵⁵ *Shiji*, vol. II:233. In the YS-Houfei biao, under the name of Xianzong (Möngke Khan), there is no name similar to Oghul Ghaimish. But under the name of Dingzong (Güyük Khan), there is a record of Oghul Ghaimish (Wowuli-Haimishi).

din also mentioned in the account of the Merkit Tribe, “Agul-quimish Khatun was the first wife of Güyük Khan. She bore two sons to him, Khuajeh and Naqu.”⁵⁶

Another opinion is represented by D’Ohsson’s *Mongolian History*, Tu Ji’s *Mengwuier Shiji* and Hong Jun’s *Yuanshi Yiwen Zheng Bu*. All three of these historians believed that there was only one woman called Oghul Ghaimish and that she was the daughter of Khudugha Beki of the Oirat tribe, and the Empress of Güyük Khan. D’Ohsson writes, “Oghul Ghaimish was the wife of the highest status among Güyük’s wives. She was the daughter of Khudugha Beki, the chief of the Oirat tribe.”⁵⁷

Ke Shaomin in his *Xin Yuanshi* provides a third opinion. He unifies two opinions and contends that there were two different persons named Wowulihaimishi (Oghul Ghaimish) among Güyük’s Empresses.

The Empress Qinshu of Dingzong, Wowuli, whose given name was Haimishi, and whose courtesy name was San Huanghou (third Empress), acted as an regent in the imperial court for four years, and did not give up power until Xianzong ascended the throne. Two years later she was found guilty of casting spells together with the imperial grandson Shiliemen (Shiremün). Shiliemen was banished to Muchituo, and the Empress was put to death. In the third year of Zhiyuan (1266), she was posthumously conferred a respectful title and her memorial tablet was placed in the temple of Dingzong. When Dingzong was still a Prince, his original wife was called Wowur-heimishi, who was from the Merkit tribe. Her date of death is unknown.⁵⁸

Although Ke Shaomin changed the Chinese characters, the pronunciations are nearly the same and clearly they are the same person.

The History of the World Conqueror provides the reader with details about how Oghul Ghaimish acted as a regent and how she was executed, but it does not tell us of her family background.⁵⁹ Neither the *Houfei zhuan* nor the *Houfei biao* in the *Yuanshi* mentions her family background.⁶⁰

The background of Oghul Ghaimish remains a mystery. If we can trust the scholarship of Rashid Al-din, then there existed two Oghul Ghaimishs. One was the wife of Güyük Khan, and the other was the wife of Möngke Khan. Another possibility is that Möngke Khan took the Empress of Güyük,

⁵⁶ Op. cit., vol. 1a:189.

⁵⁷ D’Ohsson, *Duosang Menggu shi*, Feng Chengjun, vol. 1:249.

⁵⁸ YYS 104:482-3.

⁵⁹ *World Conqueror*, Part One, XXXVII, pp. 262-66. *Shijie zhengfuzhe shi*, tr. He Gaoji, Nei Menggu Renmin Chubanshe, pp. 309-313, 690-693.

⁶⁰ The *Yuanshi* has a very short biography of about forty Chinese characters for Wowulihaimishi, in which there are three mistakes, it indicates that the author of *Yuanshi* was very ignorant about this woman.

Oghul Ghaimish, as his wife, however, considering the relationship between Güyük’s widow Oghul Ghaimish and Möngke, this explanation seems implausible. Oghul Ghaimish had protested strongly when Möngke tried to ascend the throne, and thus, they were clearly enemies. Möngke Khan once condemned her as “viler than a dog.”⁶¹ The records in the *Yuanshi*, in fact, indicate that she was killed by Möngke Khan.⁶²

It is also the case that the clan of Khudugha Beiki maintained a long standing marriage relationship with the clan of Tolui, and this relationship may have started from Oghul Ghaimish. Additional evidence comes from the fact the nephew of Khudugha Beki, Balituo, erected a monument to commemorate the birthday of Möngke Khan, indicating that they had a special relationship.

2. Ailjiqmish and Arigh Böke

Ailjiqmish was the daughter of Törölchi. According to Al-din, she was the senior wife of Arigh Böke. She was Tolui’s favorite wife, but she did not give birth to any children.⁶³

3. Orqina (Aurgneh) and Qara-Hülegü (remarried to Alghu)

Orqina was the daughter of Törölchi and Chinggis Khan’s daughter Checheyigen. Al-din states “Orqina Khatun married Qara-Hülegü, the son of Muatugan, the grandson of Chaghatai. Mubarak-Shak was born by this Orqina Khatun. Ögödei (? Chaghatai) liked her and called her Orqina *Bieli*, which means daughter-in-law. She had managed Chaghatai’s *ulus* for a long time.”⁶⁴

According to the *History of the World Conqueror*, after Chaghatai died, Qara-Hülegü acted as regent. In 1246, Güyük replaced him with Yesü-Möngke, the fifth son of Chaghatai, with the excuse that a grandson should not ascend the throne while a son was still alive.⁶⁵ However, Yesü-Möngke later joined Shiremün to challenge Möngke Khan’s claim to the throne, and therefore, when Möngke ascended the throne in 1251, he ordered Qara-Hülegü to rid Yesü-Möngke of his power, but Qara-Hülegü died on his way to the Chaghatai *ulus*. Because his son Mubarak-Shak was still young,

⁶¹ William of Rubruk, *The Journey of William of Rubruk to the Eastern Parts*, 1253-55. (Rockhill, 249-50) *Lubuluke dongxing ji*, tr. He Gaoji, Zhonghua Shuju, (1985): 310.

⁶² YS 3:45. See the basic annals of Möngke Khan.

⁶³ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:194-95. Al-din also offers another record that Buqa-Temür had four sisters.

They were Kubak, Aurgneh, Öljei and Köchü. There is no mention of Ailjiqmish.

⁶⁴ Op. cit., vol. 1a:119. Ögödei was obviously a mistake for Chahatei.

⁶⁵ *World Conqueror*, vol. 1:273.

Möngke ordered Orqina to act as regent, and ordered Yesü-Möngke to be put to death.⁶⁶ She ruled the Chaghatai *ulus* for ten years.

In 1260, a struggle for the throne occurred between Arigh Böke and Khubilai. Both of them realized the strategic political-military importance of central Asia and tried to control it. Khubilai sent Abishqa, the eldest son of Büri,⁶⁷ to return to the Chaghatai *ulus* to marry Orqina Khatun and to rule the *ulus* of Chaghatai, in place of Qara-Hülegü. But on his way he was captured by Arigh Böke and later was put to death.⁶⁸ At the same time, Arigh Böke appointed Alghu, the son of Baidar, the sixth son of Chaghatai, as ruler of the *ulus* of Chaghatai, and he successfully seized state power from Orqina Khatun. Orqina sought refuge with Arigh Böke and when Alghu killed the envoys of Arigh Böke and rebelled against Arigh Böke, she encouraged Arigh Böke to dispatch troops to attack him in 1262. In Alimali his troops pillaged the local people, causing so much outrage that his repented forces deserted him. Afraid then of a sudden attack from Alghu, Arigh Böke sent Orqina Khatun to Alghu to negotiate peace, and Alghu took Orqina Khatun as his wife, before he died in 1266. Orqina Khatun, having all the emirs and army under her command, then installed her son Mubarak-Shak, the eldest son of Qara-Hülegü, as ruler. Khubilai Khan, unhappy with this turn of events, sent Paraq, the son of Yesün-To'a and the nephew of Qara-Hülegü, to the *ulus* of Chaghatai in order to jointly govern the state, and Barak deposed Mubarak-Shak and became the absolute ruler of the *ulus*. In 1270 when Parak died, Mubarak-Shak recaptured the throne.⁶⁹

4. Kubak and Hülegü Khan

Kubak was the daughter of Törölchi and the sister of Buqa-Temür. According to Al-din, "Kubak Khatun was Hülegü's first wife, the mother of Jumqur."⁷⁰ The biography of Hülegü Khan also mentions that Kubak was born by Checheyigen, the daughter of Chinggis Khan.⁷¹

5. Öljei (Aulljai) and Hülegü and Abaqa

Öljei Khatun was the daughter of Törölchi, the sister of Güyük. She married Hülegü and gave birth to one son named Möngke-Temür, and two daughters

⁶⁶ *World Conqueror*, Part Two, II:322-323. *Shiji*, vol. 2:90-98, 159-168.

⁶⁷ Büri was the elder brother of Qara-Hülegü.

⁶⁸ *The Successors*, 3:138-39, 150.

⁶⁹ *Op. cit.*, 3:150-51; *Shiji*, vol. II:305-6.

⁷⁰ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:195.

⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. III:20.

named Mankku-lukan and Qimishi. After Hülegü died, Abaqa took her as a wife. When Abaqa died, she initially intended to set up her son Möngke-Temür as Khan, but he died early, and she then helped Arghun, the son of Abaqa, to become Khan.⁷²

6. Quchu and Toqoqan (Tuqan)

Quchu Khatun was the daughter of Törölchi, and she married the second son of Batu. In the account of the history of the Oirat tribe, Al-din says that Törölchi's other daughter's name was unknown, though she married Tuqan in Batu's honorable clan and gave to birth to Möngke-Temür. However, in the biography of Jochi her name was given, “Third son of Toqoqan---Töde-Möngke. His mother and Möngke-Temür's was Köchü Khatun, the sister of Öljei Khatun and the daughter of Buqa-Temür of the Oirat people.”⁷³ Her two sons were the Khans of Qipchaq, who ruled consecutively from 1266 to 1290.

7. Emegen and Melik-Temür

Emegan was the daughter of Pars-buqa. According to Al-Din, she married Melik-Temür, the second son of Arigh Böke. Among the six sons of Melik-Temür, four were born by this woman. They were Mingqan, Ajīqī, Yesü-To'a, and Baritai.⁷⁴

8. Nulun and Jumgur (remarried Tekshin)

Nulun was the daughter of Buqa-Temür (son of Törölchi). According to Al-Din, Nulun Khatun married Hülegü Khan's second son, Jumgur, and was his senior wife. Her daughter, Urgudaq, was married to Shadi, the son of Sunjaq-aqa.⁷⁵ According to the biography of Hülegü Khan, after Jumgur died, Nulun remarried Tekshin, the fourth son of Hülegü Khan and gave birth to a girl named Yesün.⁷⁶

9. Auljatai and Möngke-Temür (remarried Barchi)

Auljatai was the daughter of Buqa-Temür, the nephew of Öljei (Aulja) Khatun, the mother of Möngke-Temür. According to the history of the Oirat tribe and the biography of Hülegü Khan, Auljatai initially married Möngke-

⁷² Op. cit., vol. 1a:194; D'Ohsson, *Duosang Menggu shi*, tr. Feng Chengchun, vol. II:146, 189.

⁷³ *The Successors*, 2:109-11.

⁷⁴ Op. cit., 7: p. 313.

⁷⁵ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:197.

⁷⁶ Op. cit., vol III:22-23.

Temür, and gave birth to two daughters. After Möngke-Temür died, she was taken by Barchi, the son of Möngke-Temür, and she gave birth to a daughter named Quruqtai. The latter married Alapu, the son of Samuqur.⁷⁷

10. Qutluq and Öljei and Arghun Khan

Qutluq was the daughter of Tanggis *küregen*. Her mother was the daughter of Güyük Khan. She married Arghun, the fourth Il-Khan of Persia (1284-1291).⁷⁸ Öljei was the granddaughter of Tanggis *küregen*, the daughter of Sulamish and Tudakaj Khatun. Öljei married Arghun Khan when her aunt, Qutluq, died.⁷⁹

In summary, there existed sixteen Princesses of the Chinggisid clan who married into the Oirat tribe. Among them were the daughters of Chinggis Khan, Jochi Khan, Tolui, Güyük Khan; Hülegü Khan, Arigh Böke, and Khubilai Khan. In total, there were eleven women from the Oirat tribe who were married into the Chinggisid clan. The daughter of Khudugha Beki married either Möngke Khan or Güyük Khan. The five daughters of Törölchi married Arigh Böke, Hülegü, Qara-Hülegü (the grandson of Chaghatai), and Toqoqan (the grandson of Jochi). One must state that these statistics are most probably incomplete since they are merely based on current known information, and some marriages were not recorded. Therefore the actual number of marriages could be much higher.

There are some distinct characteristics in the marriages between the Oirat tribe and the Chinggisid clan. One is the marriage of cousins. For example, this occurred when Checheyigen married her daughter to her nephew Hülegü and Öljei Khatun married her daughter to her nephew Jaqir. Under this arrangement, an aunt and a niece became mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, two sisters became sisters-in-law, or they married the same man. This is a typical “consanguineous marriage”. The purpose of this type of marriage was obviously established in order to form a closer relationship between the two clans.

As previously mentioned, the marriage relationships between the Chinggisid clan and the Oirat nobles were motivated principally by the political interests of the Mongol royal family. When Chinggis Khan initiated this relationship by sending his own daughter, Checheyigen, and his granddaughter, Holuiqan, to the Oirat tribe, his purpose was very clear. He was using his daughters as his political agents to control this tribe. This was revealed by an imperial edict issued to Checheyigen. The *Altan Tobci* reads:

⁷⁷ Op. cit., vol. 1a:197; vol III: 21.

⁷⁸ Op. cit., vol. 1a:196. vol. III:186.

⁷⁹ *Shiji*, vol. III:186.

Chinggis Khan married Checheyigen Aghai⁸⁰ to Inalchi of the Oirat tribe. When the wedding was going on, he ordered the nobleman (*noyan*) Boworchu to give instructions [to Checheyigen]. Boworchu said, “Listen, Checheyigen Aghai! Because you are the daughter of your Khan father, you are being sent to govern the Oirat people. You are going to pitch a tent there. You should get up early and go to sleep late! Do not act as a stranger in your mother-in-law's family! Day and night, you should be circumspect all the time. Your words must show your wisdom. You must keep yourself chaste. Leave the things that you have not mastered home, and bring all the things you have mastered with you. You should organize the people of Oirat and control them!”⁸¹

By taking advantage of the strength and influence of the Oirat tribe, Chinggis Khan was able to successfully conquer the “people in the forest,” especially since the geographic position that the Oirat tribe occupied was very critical to the Mongol Empire. Thus, during the later political struggles, the descendants of Chinggis Khan all tried to win over the Oirat noblemen by marriage relationships to receive support from them. For the Oirat, this resulted in the break-up of their tribe. In the ensuing political struggles of the imperial clan, one part of the Oirat people joined the rebellions of the northwest Princes against the Yuan court, and the other part of the Oirat supported the Yuan court to pacify the rebellions of the northwest Princes. Historians have thus taken the position that the Oirat troops fought against each other in various campaigns because they belonged to different factions aligned to the parties who took part in internal struggles of the Mongol royal family. According to the basic annals of Khubilai Khan in the *Jāmi’ al-Tawārīkh*, in 1261, a decisive battle was fought between Arigh Böke’s army and Khubilai Khan’s army at Shimultai Lake. As a result, Arigh Böke’s army was defeated and many Oirat soldiers were slaughtered by Khubilai’s troops.⁸² In the biography of Shuchitai in the *Yuanshi*, the troops of Arigh Böke were called “Oirat troops” during the “battle of Shimultai.” This suggests that the main military strength of Arigh Böke in his rebellion consisted of troops from the Oirat tribe.⁸³

Nonetheless, the Mongol royal family maintained their longstanding marriage relationship with the Oirat nobles, and granted their descendants official titles and territories. In return, the Oirat contributed greatly to the establishment of the Mongol empire. Many of them held important positions in the Mongol court, including Khudugha Beki, Törölchi’s son Burtua

⁸⁰ According to Sechin Jagchid, “Aghai” was an honorific title for the girls of noble family in Mongolian society. It also means “baby” in the Mongolian language. See Sechin Jagchid, *Menggu huangjin shi yizhu* (1979): 43.

⁸¹ Op. cit., p. 44.

⁸² *The Successors*, 7: 256.

⁸³ *YS*, 120:2963.

(Balituo), Burtua's son Wuluhei-hexin, Törölchi's grandsons (Barsbuqa's sons) Shirap and Biklamish (*chn.* Bieqilimishi), and Yebugan, Prince of Yan'an. A good example is Biklamish, who participated in the campaigns led by Boyan in the conquest of the Southern Song, and was also active in the campaigns against the Mongol Princes' rebellions from 1270s to 1290s.

Oirat nobles were also very active in seeking political marriage alliances with the Mongol imperial clan. For them, these relationships were important device to enhance their political status and economic interests. Interestingly, their marriage relationships with the descendants of Chinggis Khan continued even after the fall of the Yuan dynasty in China.

For example, when the Mongol Anda Khan launched the westward expedition in the 1530s, he married an Oirat woman called Zhongjin, who was the daughter of the Oirat noble Qilagute-zheheng ahe. He "followed the example of Chinggis Khan by marrying Holuiqan and Chichigan to Inalchi and Törölchi, making them become *Küregens*. Yaomen's son, Anta, married his two daughters Manzhuxili and Songbur to Bokedai and the chancellor Oge, and made them become his *Küregens*."⁸⁴ Also, when Tuohuan was unifying the Mongol territories, he married his daughter Nuwen-Dashili to Buda-shili Prince of Zhongshun, in order to control the Hami area. Beginning in 1460, long after the fall of Yuan in 1368, when her son Buliege died, Nuwen-Dashili acted as regent for 22 years. Thus did the Oirat nobles maintain marriage relationships with the descendants of Chaghatai, and continued to establish marriage relationships with the rulers of the Chijin Mongols.⁸⁵

One further example is the Oirat attack on the Ming in the early Ming dynasty, which was called the "Incident of Tumu Port." In the Tumu battle, 200,000 Mongol mounted troops under the command of Esen, defeated Ming forces of 500,000 in 1449. Many scholars have studied the economic motivation for this Oirat invasion, and have shown that the Oirat ruler, Esen, was angered by the Chinese mistreatment of his envoys, and the inadequate, even worthless, gifts and payments offered him in return for his tribute. However, recent scholarship has made clear that the basic factor which instigated the war between the Chinese and the Oirats was a proposed marriage. Several works by Chinese scholars, including the *Mingchao Jishi Benmo*, conclude that the Ming ambassadors to Mongolia, without any authorization, assured Esen that his son could marry a Chinese Princess. In 1449, when he sent the marriage ritual presents for the forthcoming marriage, the Ming court, totally ignorant of Esen's discussion with the ambassadors,

⁸⁴ *Anda Khan Zhuan*, p. 12-13. Quoted in Bai Cuiqin.

⁸⁵ Bai Cuiqin, "Woyila guizu yu Chengjisihanxi lianyin kaoshu." *Minzu yanjiu*, 1 (1984): 49.

abruptly rejected the proposed marriage. Esen was so angry, it is said, that he gathered his troops for an invasion of China.⁸⁶

Morris Rossabi offers a different explanation for Esen's attack on Ming China.⁸⁷ He believes that it is more likely that Esen used the marriage proposal for his own purposes and advantage. As we have seen above, marital alliances were one of his favorite devices and an integral part of his foreign policy. In the late 1430s, he had his older sister marry his superior, the Mongol Khan Toyto-buqa, thus buttressing his own position and at the same time giving himself the aura of belonging to the Mongol ruling family. Shortly thereafter, he presented another one of his sisters to Dawadasiri, the Prince of Hami, again hoping to exert influence on that important oasis on the road from China to Central Asia and the Near East. However, in 1452, an open battle occurred between Esen and Toyto-buqa Khan because the latter did not designate the son born by Esen's sister as the Crown Prince. Esen defeated Toyto-buqa and proclaimed himself Great Khan of Yuan.⁸⁸ This event makes clear that although the Yuan dynasty in China had been replaced by the Ming in 1368, certain Mongol leaders still hoped for a restoration of their power in China.

In retrospect, Esen's strategy seems clear. He used marital alliances to attract other states or tribes before attacking them. Taking into account his previous foreign policy, Rossabi states, it seems likely that he wished to form a marital alliance with Chin, but the Chinese envoys, or perhaps the interpreters, probably informed him that the Ming Court would never agree. Nevertheless, he dispatched an embassy with gifts for the “impending marriage.”⁸⁹ If the Ming permitted the marriage, not only would Esen's prestige among the peoples of Mongolia and Central Asia had increased, but he would also have increased his influence on the Chinese border areas. If, on the other hand, the Ming rejected the proposal, he would have had a convenient excuse for his invasion of China.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ *Ming Yingzong shilu*, juan 174. See Aodeng “Lun Yexian Han,” in *Menggushi wenji*, Neimenggu Jiaoyu Chubanshe. (1992): 22.

⁸⁷ Morris Rossabi, “Notes on Esen's Pride and Ming China's Prejudice,” *The Mongolia Society Bulletin*, Bloomington, Indiana. vol. IX, Fall 2(1979): 31-36.

⁸⁸ See Aodeng “Lun Yexian Han,” *Menggushi wenji*, Neimenggu Jiaoyu Chubanshe. (1992): 32.

⁸⁹ Morris Rossabi, *Op. cit.*

⁹⁰ Morris Rossabi, *Op. cit.*

TABLE 7: Oirat Women Married into the Chinggisid Clan

Name	Husband	Father-mother
Oghul Ghaimish	Möngke Khan	Khudugha Beki (chief of Oirat tribe)
? Oghul Ghaimish	? Güyük Khan	?
Ailiqmish	Arigh Böke (the youngest son of Tolui)	Törölchi (eldest son of Khudugha Beki) or Inalchi
Orqina/Aürgneh (daughter of Checheyigen)	Qara- Hülegü (Son of Muatugan and Grandson of Chaghatai Khan)	Törölchi
Kubak (mother of Jungur)	Hülegü Khan (IL-Khan, fifth son of Tolui)	Törölchi
Öljei /Auljai (sister of Kubak, mother of Möngke-Temür, remarried Abaha)	Hülegü Khan	Törölchi
Khuchu (mother of Möngke-Temür)	Toqoqan/Tuqan (second son of Batu)	Törölchi
Emegen	Melik-Temür (second son of Arigh Böke)	Pars-buqa (third son of Törölchi)
Nulun (cousin of Jungur, remarried Tekshin)	Jungur (second son of Hülegü Khan)	Buqa- Temür (son of Törölchi)
Auljatai (cousin of Möngke-Temür remarried Barchi)	Möngke-Temür (son of Hülegü Khan)	Buqa-Temür,
Khutlq (Daughter of Güyük Khan's daughter)	Arghun (IL-Khan of Persia, r.1284-1291)	Tankkiz (chief of Oirat tribe)
Öljei (granddaughter of Tenggis)	Arghun	Sulamish

TABLE 8: Princesses of the Chinggisid Clan Married into the Oirat Tribe

Princess	Husband	Father
Checheyigen (second daughter of Chinggis Khan)	Törölchi (Eldest son of Khudugha Beki) or Inalchi (Second son of Khudugha Beki)	Chinggis Khan
Holuiqan/Huolu	Inalchi	Jochi (first son of Chinggis Khan)
Tuotuohui (Granddaughter of Khubilai Khan)	Tumandar	?
Yixiji	? Burtua [Palituo] (Grandson of Khudugha Beki)	?
Ile-Temür (Yantimur) (Daughter of Lingqun Khatun)	Pars-buqa (Third son of Törölchi)	Tolui (youngest son of Chinggis Khan)
??	Biklamish/Bielimishi (Great grandson of Khudugha Beki, the son of Parsbuqa)	??
??	Shirap/Shalan (Son of Parsbuqa)	??
?? (Princess of Yan'an)	Yebugan (Prince of Yan'an)	??
Numugan (Daughter of Hutuheita Khatun)	Junan (Eldest son of Buqa-Temür, the son of Törölchi)	Arigh Böke (The youngest son of Tolui)
Emegen	Toq-Temür (Grandson of Pars-buqa and great-grandson of Törölchi)	Melik-Temür (Second son of Arigh Böke)
??	Tanggis/Tengjisi (Chief of Oirat tribe)	Güyük Khan (son of Ögödei Khan)
Tödögach (After Tanggis died, remarried his son Sulamish. Then remarried Chechak, the son of Sulamish)	Tanggis/ Sulamish/ Chechak	Hülegü Khan (IL-Khan, fifth son of Tolui)
Mankku-lukan	Jaqir (Son of Buqa-Temür and the grandson of Törölchi)	Hülegü Khan
Araqutluq	Tarqai	Möngke-Temür
??	Nauruz (Son of Arghun-aqa)	??
??	Lakzi (Son of Arghun-aqa)	??

MARRIAGE LIST 5: *Mongol Royal Family Married into the Oirat Tribe*

1. Möngke Khan (r. 1251-1259).....(1) Oghul Ghaimish
2. Arigh Böke (d. 1266)(2) Ailiqmish
3. Qara-Hülegü (r. 1242-1246, 1252).....(3) Orqīna/Aūrgneh
4. Hülegü (1217-1265).....(4) Kubak (5) Öljei
5. Toqoqan(6) Khuchu
6. Melik-Temür(7) Emegen
7. Jungur(8) Nulun
8. Möngke-Temür (1230~1280).....(9) Auljatai
9. Arghun (1258-1291)(10) Khutlq (11) Öljei

MARRIAGE LIST 6: *Oirat Tribe Married into Mongol Royal Family*

1. Törölchi.....(1) Checheyigen
2. Inalchi(2) Holuiqan
3. Tumandar(3) Tuotuohui
4. Burtua.....(4) Yixiji
5. Pars-buqa(5) Ile-Temür
6. Biklamish(6) ?
7. Shirap(7) ?
8. Yebugan(8) ?
9. Junan(9) Numugan
10. Toq-Temür(10) Emegen
11. Tanggis.....(11)? (12) Tödögach
12. Jaqir.....(13) Mankku-lukan
13. Tarqai(14) Araqutluq
14. Nauruz(15) ?
15. Lakzi(16) ?

CHAPTER NINE

“One-way” Marriages: The Imperial Marriages between the Mongolian Royal Family and the Öngüt Tribe

According to the *Yuanshi*, the chief of the Öngüt tribe, Alawusi Tijihuli Alaqush-tikin-quli was the descendant of the Shatuo-yanmen; and according to Rashid Al-din, “Alawusi” was his name and “Tijihuli” was his official title.¹ In the Jin dynasty (1115-1234) he was entrusted by the Jurgens to guard the fortresses on the Great Wall.² Because the Mongols called the Great Wall, “Ongou”, the Öngüt tribe was given this name.³

As Chinggis Khan rose to power in the early thirteenth century, military and political considerations impelled him to establish a marriage relationship with the Öngüt tribe. In 1203, he conquered the Kereit tribe whose western territory was contiguous to the Naiman tribe.⁴ The Taiyang Khan of the Naiman, fearful of an invasion of the Mongols, sent an envoy named Yuehunan to persuade Alawusi to jointly attack the Mongols.

The Naiman tribe and the Öngüt tribe belonged to the same ethnic group, and were all called “White Tartar” (in contrast to the Mongols who were called “Black Tartar”), and had amutual marriage relationship.⁵ Alawusi, however, realized that they were not strong enough to defeat Chinggis Khan, and so decided to ignore the opposition of his subordinates and submit to Chinggis. He thus arrested the envoys of Taiyang Khan and ordered Tuor Bitashi to send them under escort to Chinggis. He also informed Chinggis of the scheme of Taiyang Khan, while presenting six jugs of wine to Chinggis in a ritual gesture, to Chinggis. Chinggis was very pleased, and repaid him with five hundred horses and one thousand sheep, and decided to establish an alliance and a marriage relationship with him, calling him *Anda-huda*.⁶

¹ *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 230.

² *YS* 118: 2923.

³ *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 229-30.

⁴ *YS* 1:11.

⁵ *MWESJ* 36:1. See the biography of Alawusi Tijihuli.

⁶ “*Anda*.” Sworn brothers; “*huda*.” relatives by marriage of children.

Chinggis also proposed that Alawusi marry his third daughter Alahai Beki, but Alawusi politely declined, saying that he was too old to marry the Princess. Instead he proposed that his elder son Buyanxiban marry the Princess.⁷

Alawusi did, however, participate in the campaign launched by Chinggis against the Naiman tribe, and in 1206, when Chinggis Khan ascended the throne, Alawusi was enfeoffed as Battalion Commander to command his own five thousand households.⁸

In 1211 (the sixth year of Chinggis Khan), when the Mongol troops were about to launch a campaign against the Jin dynasty, they reorganized in the territory of the Öngüt tribe after a long march. Alawusi and his forces guided the Mongol troops cross the border, and shortly thereafter, he was ordered by Chinggis to return to take full control of his own tribe. However, a group of his subordinates, who opposed his cooperation with the Mongols, rioted and killed him. According to the *Yuanshi*, his eldest son Buyanxiban died at the same time, while Alahai Beki, Alawusi's younger son Boyaohe, and his nephew Zhenguo, fled to Jieyuan, and finally took refuge in the city of Yunzhong. When the Mongols later captured Yunzhong, Chinggis issued an order to find them. Since Boyaohe was still young, Alawusi's nephew Zhenguo was given the title of "Prince of Beiping" and was given governance over the Öngüt tribe. At the same time Zhenguo married his cousin's widow, Alahai Beki,⁹ one of the most intriguing figures of the period.

The Mystery of Alahai Beki

Alahai Beki was the daughter of Cheinggis Khan and his first wife Börte Ujin. She was a very important woman in the history of the Öngüt tribe. Her married life, however, is very controversial. It has been a mystery regarding both how many men (one, two, three, or even four) she married and when she was initially married into the Öngüt tribe.

The records of Alahai Beki in the *Yuanshi* are unclear and somewhat misleading, and according to the *Yuanshi*, it seems that Alahai only married one man, Alawusi's younger son Boyaohe. Other sources contradict this view. The "Table of Princesses" in the *Yuanshi*, for instance, tells us: "Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao, Alahai Bieji, the daughter of Taizu

⁷ *MWESJ* 36:2.

⁸ *The Secret History*, ch. VIII:142.

⁹ *YS* 118: 2924.

(Chinggis Khan), married Boyaohe, the Prince Zhao Wuyi.”¹⁰ Furthermore, the *Yuanshi* biography of Alawisi tells us:

Taizu ordered Alawisi Tilihuli to return home and govern his own tribe, [but] he was killed by [those of] his subordinates who had formerly objected to him, and his elder son Buyanxiban died with him. His wife Alihei took his younger son Boyaohe, together with his nephew Zhenguo, and fled from the calamity at night to Jieyuan. There they told the guards about the tragedy and climbed into the city using ropes. Afterwards they took refuge in Yunzhong city. When Taizu (Chinggis) pacified Yunzhong, he offered a reward to find them and compensated them generously. Alawusi Tijiuli was posthumously granted the title “Prince of Gaotang,” and Alihei was granted the title “Imperial Concubine of Gaotang.” Because his son Boyaohe was still young, Taizu first granted the title “Prince of Beiping” to his nephew Zhenguo. When Zhenguo died, his son Niegutai succeeded to the title and married the daughter of Ruizong, Princess Dumugan. Niegutai died in battle. ...Boyaohe had taken part in the campaign against the Western Regions since his childhood, and when he returned, he was granted the title “Prince of Beiping,” and married Princess Alahai Bieji. Because Boyaohe did not have sons, the Princess presented him with concubines to bear offspring, and they bore him three sons.¹¹

The biography of Alawusi Tilihuli in the *Yuanshi* seems to have based on the inscription of the “Tablet of Imperial Sons-in-law, Princes of Gaotang” (*Fuma Gaotang Zhongxianwang bei*)¹² which was written by the Chinese scholar Yan Fu during Chengzong’s reign (1294-1307). It was written on the request of Shuhunan, the great grandson of Alawusi. This stele inscription also seems to intentionally hide the truth about the marriage of Alahai Beki. There are two women’s names in the biography: Alihei and Alahai, but Shuhunan called both of them “grandmother (*zubi*).” Were they one person or two? It is highly probable that they were the same person, namely, Princess Alahai.

The *Yuanshi* does not state when Alahai Beki first married into the Öngüt tribe, though according to *The Secret History*, it was in 1207 (Year of the Rabbit, *Tuer nian*, the second year of Chinggis Khan). *The Secret History*, however, does not indicate the man whom Alahai first married, and only says, “He (Chinggis Khan) gave Alaqai unto the Önggüd.”¹³ According to Al-din, Princess Alahai was born between the time of Ögödei and Tolui.¹⁴

¹⁰ YS 109:2757-8.

¹¹ Op. cit. 118:2924.

¹² Su Tianjue, YWL, Vol. 23:281-4.

¹³ *The Secret History*, ch. X, p.173. YCMS, annotated by Chen Binhe, Shangwu Yinshu Guan, (1933): 150-151.

¹⁴ *Shiji*, vol. 1a, p. 231. YSYWZB, Vol.1:111.

Ögödei died in 1241 (the eleventh month of Xinchou) when he was 56,¹⁵ so he was born in 1186. Tolui died in 1231/1232 at the age of forty or so¹⁶, and thus he was born in about 1191/1192. Accordingly, Alahai Beki must have been born between 1186 and 1191, and she was between 16 and 21 years old when she was first married into the Öngüt tribe in 1207.

Chinggis Khan launched his first westward expedition in 1219 (*Jimao*), and Boyaohe went along with the Mongol troops as a child. Seven years later, in 1225 (*Yiyu*), the first Westward Expedition ended, and Boyaohe returned from the Western Regions when he was 17 years old. He was granted the title “Prince of Beiping” and married Princess Alahai. At that time the Princess’s age was between 34 and 39, and so it seems that there was a gap of 18 years from 1207 to 1225 when the Princess was living in the Öngüt tribe. Who was her husband(s) during that period? If, as Tu Ji assumed, Alihei and Alahai in the stele inscription of biography of Alawusi in the *Yuanshi* were actually the same person, then the first man Alahai married must have been Alawusi. And the important piece of evidence is that in the name list of ninety-five *Battalion Commanders* announced after Chinggis Khan ascended the throne, we find “Alawushi Dijitihuli *Küregen*.”¹⁷ The term, “*küregen*”, means “son-in-law” in Mongolian language, and if Alawusi did not marry the Princess, how could he be called “son-in-law” by Chinggis Khan?

A Japanese scholar, Naka Michiyo, believes that Alawusi in fact married Alahai Beki:

She was called Alahe Bieqi in Volume 10 of the Mongol Secret History. She had married Alawusi before she married Zhenguo. In vol. 10 of the Secret History it says “gave Alahe Bieqi to Wangguti,” so she was given to Alawusi. The “Alihei Beyin” in the Mengda Beilu is a different transliteration of Alahe Bieqi, and Alihei, the wife of Alawusi in the Yuanshi, was actually the Alihei in the Beilu as well as the Alahe in the Secret History. The Mongols did not avoid remarriage as a taboo, and when a father died, his son would marry his stepmother. When an elder brother died, his younger brother would marry his sister-in-law. Originally, the Xiongnu, Tujue and the tribes the north of the Great Wall all had such a custom. Boyaohe was probably born by Alawushi’s ex-wife. When Alawushi was killed, Boyaohe was still young. Therefore Alahe remarried his husband’s nephew Zhenguo.

¹⁵ Du Jianmin, *Zhongguo lidai diwang shixi nianbiao*, Qilu Shushe, (1995): 184. Shao Yechang *Zhongguo lidai huangdi gailan*, Changchun Chunbanshe, 1989.

¹⁶ Morris Rossabi, “Khubilai and the Women in his Family,” in *Studia Sino-Mongolica*, Festschrift. Fur Herbert Franke ed. by Wolfgang Bauer, pp. 153-80. Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, Wiesbaden, 1979.

¹⁷ *The Secret History*, ch. VIII, p. 142: “Ala Qush Digid Quri Güregen of the Önggüd, five thousand Önggüd.” *Xinyi jianzhu Menggu mishi*, p. 222.

After Zhenguo died, Boyaohe returned home, and married Alahai according to the custom that a son should marry his stepmother. In Yan Fu’s “Fuma Gaotang Wang Kuolijisi Bei” the “great grandmother” and “grandmother” were actually the same person, but Alawushi’s wife is called great grandmother Alihei, while Boyaohe’s wife is called great grandaunt Alahai Bieji. It seems that they were two persons. And the stele inscription did not state the background of Alihei. The biography in the Yuanshi was copied completely from the stele inscription. Therefore the historians who wrote the biography in the early Ming dynasty did not know that Alihei was actually Alahai.¹⁸

Thus, the question arises, did Buyanxiban marry the Princess? Naka Michiyo is skeptical, and, his reasoning is the following: “Although it was the Mongolian custom that a son should marry his stepmother after his father died, Buyanxiban and his father died at the same time, so that thus he should not have married his stepmother when his father was still alive.”¹⁹ If the father and son really died at the same time, then only one of them could have married the Princess.

However, Zhou Qingshu provides evidence showing that Alawusi and Buyanxiban did not die in the same year. “It was in 1204 when the Öngüt tribe established friendship with Chenggis Khan when they conquered the Naimans. It could only have been after this year that Alahai Beki married Alawusi. Since Alawusi died in 1207, the time was very short after they married. Therefore, she must have remarried to Buyanxiban soon after she went to the Öngüt tribe. Buyanxiban died in 1211 soon after Chinggis Khan’s first attack on the Jin.”²⁰

Zhao Gong, in the Southern Song dynasty, recorded in *Mengda beilu* that “The Emperor Chinggis has seven daughters, of whom the second Princess is called Alihei Beyin, known as Madam Biji. She had married Baisibu, the deceased subject of the Jin, but is now in widowhood since her husband died, and she has been in charge of the state affairs of the White Tartar.”²¹ According to Tu Ji, Alihei was actually Alahai, and Baisibu is a different transliteration of Buyanxiban.²² Peng Daya and Xu Ting in the Southern Song dynasty also recorded in the *Heida shi lue*²³ that “Baisima is also

¹⁸ Naka Michiyo, *Jingisu Kan jitsuroku*, Tokyo: Dai Nihon Tosho Kabushiki Kaisha, (1907): 329-330.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Zhou Qingshu, “Wanggubu yu Chengjis Han jiazuo shidai tonghun de guanxi,” *Menggu shi lunwen xuanji*, Huhehaote, 1 (1983): 135.

²¹ Zhao Gong, *Mengda beilu*, in *Shu fu*, yuan 54.

²² *MWESJ* 36:2. . Also see *YS* 118:2924.

²³ [Song] Peng Daya, *Heida shilue*, annotated by Xu Ting. Peng Daya went to Mongolia in 1232 while Xu Ting was in Mongolia during 1235-36 accompanying the Song envoys. Peng Daya was a “Record Writing Officer.” He first wrote a rough manuscript, and when

called Baisibu, who is the puppet Prince of the White Tartar, the son-in-law of Temuzhen, the ex-husband of the puppet Princess Alahan.” According to Tu Ji, Baisima is the shortened form of Buyanxiban *fuma*. In 1221 Zhao Gong went to Mongolia, accompanying the envoy of the Southern Song, and wrote the *Meng Da Bei Lu*. At that time, Buyanxiban and Zhenguo had both died, and Boyaohe was still in the Western Regions. Alahai was in widowhood and spent each day reading Buddhist sutras. Peng Daya traveled to Mongolia in 1232, and Xu Ting went to Mongolia around 1235. At that time about ten years had passed after Alahai Beki remarried Boyaohe.

There remains no record of the remarriage of Alahai Beki with Zhenguo in primary Chinese sources. It is found only in Rashid al-Din’s *Jami’al-Tavarikh* that which says: “When Zhenguo came, he served Chinggis Khan. Chinggis Khan granted his daughter Alahai Beki to him. She was younger than Ögödei Khan and older than *Yeke Nayan* (Tolui). Hereafter she was called Alahai Beki. Alahai Beki bore a son with Zhenguo named Niegudai.”²⁴

Based on the records in Rashid al-Din’s book Hong Jun concluded:

After a careful investigation and inference, it must have been that the Princess first married Zhenguo. After her husband died, she was in charge of the affairs of the Öngüt tribe. Later her husband’s younger brother returned from the Western Regions, and married the Princess. Zhenguo’s son Niegutai was born by the Princess, while Boyaohe’s three sons were born by the concubines presented by the Princess.²⁵

The marriage of Alahai Beki requires future investigations. I am inclined to believe that Alahai Beki first married Alawusi Tijihuli in 1207, but Alawusi was killed in the same year, and she then remarried Buyanxiban. When Buyanxiban died in 1211, she remarried Zhenguo, who seems to have died some time before 1221 since Zhao Gong tells us that Alahai Beki was in widowhood when he went to Mongolia. She for a fourth time to Boyaohe around 1225, when the latter returned with the Mongol troops from the Western Regions.

Alahai Beki played a very important role in the government during the early period of the Mongol Empire. She was generally called “Princess Regent” (*jian guo gongzhu* 監國公主) in Chinese sources, and her authority was not limited to the domain of the Öngüt tribe, but also to the northern

Xu Ting returned, he wrote down what he observed and heard in the same book, using Peng Daya’s records as the original text and his own records as the annotations.

²⁴ *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 231.

²⁵ *YSWZB* 3:131.

China. For instance, she had the authority to appoint the Regional Commander of the Middle Capital²⁶ and Hebei province.²⁷



10. “The Seal of Representative of the Princess in Regent, Governor General of Hebei.”

There are 14 Chinese characters “監國公主行宣差河北都總管之印” and two lines of Uighur scripts in the middle.²⁸

²⁶ YS 153:3612. See the biography of Wang Ji. “In the year of *wuzi* (1228), as ordered by the Princess Regent, [Wang Ji] became the Regional Commander of the Middle Capital.”

²⁷ In 1958, archaeologists in Inner Mongolia discovered an official seal with fourteen characters which reads, “Seal of envoy of Princess Regent in Hebei”, and two Uighur characters, see Ding Xueyun, “Jianguo gongzhu tongyin kaoshi” (An Examination and Explanation of the Seal of the Princess-Regent), in *Zhongguo Menggushi xuehui chengli dahui jinian jikan*.

²⁸ Nei Menggu xinwen wang June 17, 2005, <http://www.nmgnews.com.cn/information/article/20050617/6048_1.html>, Jan. 18, 2008.

Other Öngüt Men and Mongol Princesses

Boyaohe had three sons, called Junbuhua, Aibuhua and Zhuolibuhua.

Junbuhua married the daughter of Güyük, Princess Yelimish, participated in the campaign against the Southern Song at Diaoyushan in Sichuan under the command of Möngke Khan,²⁹ and was granted the title of Zhongxiang posthumously. He had three sons: Nangjiatai Qiaolinchu and Antong.

Nangjiatai married Princess Yilianzhen and was granted the title of “Prince of Zhonglie,” while his son, Mazhahan, married Princess Sanggebala and was granted the title of “Prince of Zhao” in 1323 (the first year of Taiping). Junbuhua’s second son Qiaolinchu married Princess Huihe, the daughter of Prince Azhiji (great grandson of Chaghadaï) and was posthumously titled “Prince Zhao Kangxi.”³⁰

Boyaohe’s second son Aibuhua married Princess Yuelie, the daughter of Khubilai Khan. He seems to have been a formidable warrior, participating in the campaign against Arigh Böke and defeating the rebellious general Kuobuhua. In 1263 (the third year of the Zhongtong era), he took part in the campaign against Li Tan who had rebelled in Ji’nan, Shandong, during Khubilai’s reign, and later led his troops to conquer the rebel Princes in the northwest under the command of the chancellor Boyan. He played a part in the defeat of the rebellious general Saliman.

Although Aibuhua was only a second son, it seems that both because of his military prowess and because he married the daughter of Khubilai, he was the principal representative of the Öngüt tribe during Khubilai’s reign. His brother, Boyaohe’s third son, Zhuolibuhua, served as the governor of Yunnan and died there, while his son Huosidan married Princess Zhuhuzhen, the daughter of Prince Buluochu (Ögödei’s great-grandson).

Aibuhua himself had four sons, all of whom were born by Princess Yuelie. They were Kuolijisi, Yexian-Haimishi (who died young), Shuhunan, and Alibadai. After Aibuhua died, his eldest son Kuolijisi inherited his official titles.

Kuolijisi was highly Sinicized, especially interested in Confucianism, built a library named “*WanYuan Tang*” (Ten thousand volume Hall) in his mansion, frequently discussing scholarship with Confucian scholars, and went so far as to build a temple for Confucius in the garrisoned north frontier. He married Princess Hudadiemishi, the daughter of Jin Gim (son of Khubilai Khan), and after she died, he married Princess Aiyashili, the

²⁹ *YS* 118:2924-5. *XYS* 115: 523.

³⁰ *XYS* 115:524.

daughter of Tiemuer Khan (Chengzong). When Prince Yebugan rebelled in 1287 (the twenty-fourth year of the Zhiyuan era), he led a force of one thousand mounted troops to put down the rebellion, but in a battle, he was wounded by three arrows. When his army returned in triumph, he was awarded 1.5 kilograms of gold and 750 kilograms of white gold (*baijin*). When Chengzong ascended the throne in 1295, Kuolijisi was titled “Prince of Gaotang,” together with a gold seal. When the rebel Princes Khaidu and Du’a harassed the north frontiers, Kuolijisi asked the emperor for a military commission, and swore on departure, “If I cannot pacify the northwest my horse will never head south.” In the first battle in 1297, his troops inflicted a crushing defeat on the enemy, and the delighted emperor issued a decree to grant him the marten coat and a treasured saddle that had been used by Khubilai Khan, together with seven hundred bolts of brocade, as well as various weapons. Unfortunately, in a battle in the following year, Kuolijisi and his six thousand troops were defeated by Du’a’s army, and Kuolijisi was captured. The enemy tried to force him to marry a particular woman, but he said, “I am the son-in-law of the emperor. How can I remarry without the permission of the Khan and the Empress?”³¹

The Yuan court was shocked by the capture of Kuolijisi, and it immediately sent troops to rescue him. When the rescue failed, it tried to use the son-in-law of Du’a, who had been captured by the Yuan army, to exchange for Kuolijisi, but this too failed and Kuolijisi was eventually killed by the rebels.³² In 1305 he was posthumously titled “Zhongxian” (loyalty and devotion), and his wife, Princess Hudadiemish was posthumously titled “Senior Princess of the State of Qi”, and his second wife, Aiyashili, was granted the title of “Princess of the Sate of Qi.” Since his first son, Shu’an, was too young to command troops, Shuhunan, the younger brother of Kuolijisi, inherited the title of “Prince of Gaotang.” Shuhunan married Princess Yemian’ganzhen, the daughter of Wuludai, the Prince of Hejian. When Yemian’ganzhen died, he married Princess Ashituluhu, the daughter of Prince Nailabuhua.³³ In 1308 Shuhunan was further granted the title of “Prince of Zhao.” In the same year he returned the title to his nephew Shu’an. Shu’an then married Princess Aladinabala, the daughter of Ganmala. However, the basic annals of Yingzong in the *Yuanshi* records that in 1322 (the second year of Zhizhi), “Princess Alatenabala was about to marry, [Yingzong] granted her a half million *guans* of money.”³⁴ Chen Yuan

³¹ YS 118:2925-6. *Shiji*, vol. 2:383

³² *Shiji*, vol. 2, pp. 384-5.

³³ Son of Arigh Böke. Also called Nairaqu-buqa. See YS 107:2721. *Shiji*, vol. 2:369.

³⁴ YS 28:619.

claimed that it was the remarriage of the Princess. She did give birth to children with Shu'an.³⁵

Kuolijisi's younger brother Alibadai married Princess Nulun, the daughter of Wangze, Prince of Wei, son of Yulongdashi and grandson of Möngke Khan.³⁶

Al-din records that Alahai Beki and Zhenguo also had a son named Ankudai who married the daughter of Tolui,³⁷ and according to the *Yuanshi*, this son's name was Niegutai and he married Princess Dumugan, the daughter of Tolui, and inherited the title "Prince of Beiping."³⁸ Because he did not have a son, he designated Shuhunan as his successor. When Shuhunan returned the title of "Prince of Zhao" to Shu'an, he inherited the title of "Prince of Yu". Shuhunan was posthumously granted the title of "Zhongxiang."

Princess Dumugan, about whom we know too little, was probably another influential woman in the history of the Öngüt tribe. An inscription on a tablet in the name of a Buddhist Monk, a description of her is recorded. "In the year *renzi* (1252)...on the fifteenth day of the sixth month of this year, Princess Dumogan, the daughter of Taizu, who had great influence in the court and the commonalty, and who was widely known for her military prowess, respected our master's moral integrity, and therefore granted him a title of "*fo ri yuan zhao* 佛日圓照" (Buddhist sunshine).³⁹ The year 1252 was the second year of Möngke Khan's reign, and as the younger sister of the Khan, she may have been governess of the Öngüt tribe during this period, since her husband had died in the war while conquering the Southern Song.

In addition, the basic annals of Renzong and the Table of Princes in the *Yuanshi* records a person named Alutu who was titled Prince of Zhao in

³⁵ See *Huayi xue zhi*, vol. 3, No. 1. quoted in Zhou Qingshu, "Wanggubu yu Chengjisi Han jiazuo shidai tonghun de guanxi", *Menggu shi lunwen xuanji*, Huhehaote, 1 (1983): 148-9.

³⁶ YS 107:2723. See the Table of Princes.

³⁷ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:231.

³⁸ YS 109:2758. See the Table of Princesses, "Princess Dumugan, the daughter of Ruizong, married Prince of Yu, Niegudai, who was the younger brother of Baiha." This record is incorrect. Baiha is a different transliteration of Boyaohe, who was the uncle of Niegutai, not his elder brother. According to Rashid Al-din, Princess Dumugan's age fell between that of Möngke Khan and Hülegü Khan. Rashid wrote "Niegudai" as "Aukudai." See *Shiji*, vol. 1a:231.

³⁹ (Shi) Xiangmai, "Xijing Dahuayansi Fori yuanzhao Minggong heshang beiming," *Shanyou shike congbian*, juan 25. "The daughter of Taizu" should be "the granddaughter of Taizu." Quoted in "Wanggubu yu Chengjisi Han jiazuo shidai tonghun de guanxi", in *Menggu Shi Lunwen Xuanji*, Huhehaote, 1 (1983): 141.

1314, and, according to the studies of Zhou Qingshu, he married the Princess of Zhao, Jilashisi.⁴⁰

The Öngüts were, in general, followers of Nestorianism according to new archeological discoveries.⁴¹ Among the leaders of the Öngüt tribe who were representatives of Nestorianism, Kuolijisi, Prince of Zhao, was perhaps the best example. Initially he believed in Nestorianism, but was later converted to Catholicism, when Pope Nicholas IV sent a bishop to China named Giovanni di Monte Corvino who lived in the Öngüt tribe for a long time and established a close relationship with Kuolijisi. He wrote,

There is a Prince named George (Kolijisi) here.... Previously he believed in Nestorianism. One year after I came here, we became very close, and he followed my words and was converted to the orthodox religion, namely, Catholicism, and he was among the monks. ...Therefore, the Nestorian sect criticized him for abandoning his belief. The Prince led his people to be converted to the orthodox religion, and donated money to build a church...When Prince George died, he left one son who was still an infant, but now he is already nine years old. When Prince George died, his younger brothers mistakenly believed in the heresy of Nestorianism, and again led astray the people who were converted to the orthodox religion when the Prince was alive. The son of Prince George, John (*chn. Shu'an*), probably used my name as his name. I pray the Lord to let him follow his father.⁴²

This reveals a degree of religious dissension among the Öngüt, but that Nestorianism was still the principal religion of the tribe.

Kuolijisi's younger sister was also a devout Nestorian, and in fact, translated the Gospels into the Syrian language. Moreover, Kuolijisi's father Aibuhua, and his uncle Junbuhua were also ardent Christians, with Junbuhua financially supporting Lieban Saoma and Markesi in their pilgrimage to Jerusalem 1275.⁴³ As a general rule, the Mongol rulers followed a policy of freedom of belief, and because of their marriage relationship with the Öngüt tribe, they gave a degree of preferential treatment to the Nestorians, and financed the erection of built many churches in the Öngüt territories.

According to Rashid Al-din, some Öngüt women were married into the imperial family of the Yuan, but if so, they were exceptions. And none of them became Empresses of the Yuan, unlike the women of the Onggirat and

⁴⁰ YS 108:2740. 25:564.

⁴¹ Nestorianism was called *Jingjiao* or *Yelikewen* in the Yuan dynasty. See Zheng Mao, “Yuandai Wanggubu Jidujiao qiantan,” *Neimeng sheke*, 6 (1993): 82-6.

⁴² Zhang Zhenglang, *Zhong Xi jiaotong shiliao huibian*, No. 2. quoted in Zheng Mao, “Yuandai Wanggubu Jidujiao qiantan.” *Neimeng Sheke*, 6 (1993): 84.

⁴³ See Gai Shanlin, “Yuandai Wanggubu diqu de Jingjiao yiji yu Jingjiao zai Dong Xi wenhua jiaoliu zhong de zuoyong,” *Zhongguo Menggushi xuehui lunwen xuanji*, (1981): 92.

Ikires tribes. Öngüt case is similar to that of the Uighur tribe and Korean court. Their leaders could marry the Princesses of the Yuan, but the Yuan emperors did not marry their daughters.

TABLE 9: Princesses of the Yuan Court Married into the Öngüt Tribe

PRINCESS	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Alahai-Bieji [Alaqai-begi]	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Alawusi Tijihuli Buyanxiban Zhenguo Boyaohe	Chinggis Khan (Taizu)
Dumugan /Tümügen		Niegutai (Prince of Yu, son of Zhenguo) Chahu	Tolui (Ruizong)
Yelimishi /Yelmish	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Junbuhua (Prince of Zhong Xiang son of Boyaohe)	Güyük Khan (Dingzong)
Yuelie /Yüre(k)	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Aibuhua (son of Boyaohe)	Khubilai Khan (Shizu)
Yilianzhen	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Nangjiatai (Prince of Zhong Lie son of Junbuhua)	?
Huihe/Uyihur	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Qiaolinchu (son of Junbuhua)	Azhiji
Hudadiemish /Qudadmish	Princess-Supreme of State of Zhao	Kuolijisi (Prince of Zhong Xian son of Aibuhua)	Jin Gim (Yuzong)
Aiyashili /Aiyashiri	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Kuolijisi	Temür Öljeitü (Chengzong)
Nulun		Alibadai (the third son of Aibuhua)	Wan Ze (Prince of Wei, son of Yulongdashi and grandson of Möngke Khan)
Yemian'gan- zhen /Emegenjin		Shuhunan (Prince of Zhong Xiang, son of Aibuhua)	Wuludai (Prince of hejian, second son of Kuoliejian)
Ashituhulu /Ashi(q)tuqlu q	Princess-Supreme of the State of Zhao	Shuhunan	Nailahubuhua

Sanggebula /Suga-bala (Yingzong’s sister?)	Grand and Senior Princess of the State of Zhao	Mazhahan (son of Nangjiatai, Prince of Zhao)	?
□ nan		Mazhahan	Huangwutiemuer
Aladinabala /Aradnabala	Grand and Senior Princess-of-State of Zhao	Shu’an (Prince of Zhao)	Kammala (Prince of Jin, son of Jin Gim)
Zhuhuzhen /Juqujin	Princess-of-State of Zhao	Huosidan	Buluochu
Jilashisi /Bkra-shis	Princess of-state -of Zhao	Alahudu (Prince of Zhao)	?

**TABLE 10: Concubines of the Yuan Imperial Family
from the Öngüt Tribe**

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Haimishi	Imperial Consort	Abaha (Ill-Khan, grandson of Tolui)	?
Bizhaxia ⁴⁴	Imperial Consort	Ganmala (Prince of Jin)	Aibuhua
Yeliwan	Imperial Consort	Antanbuhua (Prince of Qin)	Aibuhua
Hudulu Qudulu(q) ⁴⁵	Imperial Consort	Yebugan (Prince of Hejian)	Aibuhua

⁴⁴ Yan Fu’s “*Fuma Gaotang Zhongxianwang bei*” states that “Wuxiang (Aibuhua) ...had three daughters: Bizhaxia was the concubine of the Prince of Jin.”

⁴⁵ Yan Fu’s “*Fuma Gaotang Zhongxianwang bei*” states that Aibuhua’s third daughter Hudulu, “was the Noble Consort of Yebugan, the Prince of Hejian.” Yebugan was the son of Wuludai (Prince of Hejian) whose daughter was Yemianganzhen, the former wife of Shuhunan. Although the Öngüt tribe had a marriage relationship with “Prince of Hejian,” Kuolijisi’s first expedition punishing the rebel Prince in 1287 (the twenty-fourth year of Zhiyuan) was against the Prince of Hejian, Yebugan.

MARRIAGE LIST 7: *Öngüt Tribe Males Who Married into the Mongol Royal Family*

1. Alawusi Tijihuli (1) Alahai Bieji (married four times)
2. Buyanxiban (1) Alahai Bieji
3. Zhenguo (1) Alahai Bieji
4. Boyaohe (1) Alahai Bieji
5. Niegutai (2) Dumugan
6. Aibuhua (3) Yuelie
7. Junbuhua (4) Yelimish
8. Kuolijisi (5) Hudadiemish (6) Aiyashili
9. Nangjiatai (7) Yilianzhen
10. Qiaolincha (8) Huihe
11. Shuhunan (9) Ashituluhu (10) Yemian' ganzhen
12. Mazhahan (11) Sanggebala (12) nan
13. Huosidan (13) Zhuhuzhen
14. Alibadai (14) Nulun
15. Shu'an (15) Aladinabala
16. Alahuda (16) Jilashisi

MARRIAGE LIST 8: *Mongol Royal Family Males Who Married into the Öngüt Tribe*

1. Abaha (1) Haimishi
2. Ganmala (2) Bizhaxia
3. Antanbuhua (3) Yeliwan
4. Yebugan (4) Hudulu

CHAPTER TEN

“One-way” Marriages: Imperial Marriages between the Mongolian Royal Clan and the Uighur Iduq-qut Clan

The Uighur people in the Yuan dynasty were formerly called Huihe in the Tang dynasty. After they were defeated by the Tang, a group of the Huihe people fled to Xizhou and thus was called Xizhou Huihe. Xizhou was also called Hezhou in the Song, Liao and Jin dynasties, therefore they were also called Hezhou Huihe. The ruler of the Uighurs was not called Khan, but Idug-qut, which means “lord of fortune.”¹ The Uighur Iduq-qut Barchukh Art Tegin submitted to Chinggis in 1209, and was adopted as the “fifth son” of Chinggis Khan.² Since that event, the Uighurs began to establish a close relationship with the Mongols, and became one of their most trusted allies. Their military role in the establishment of the Mongol Empire gave them a higher position in the Yuan dynasty than that of the other allied nationalities.

As several scholars have shown, Uighurs not only actively took part in various military campaigns, cultural constructions, and the financial management of the Mongol empire, but were inevitably drawn into the political struggles of the Mongol court, so that several of them suffered in political purges and persecutions. At several junctures during the Yuan, Uighur territories became a battleground in civil wars between rebel Mongol Princes and the Yuan government, with the result that the Uighur people suffered greatly, and eventually were forced to abandon their native lands and take refuge in China and other parts of the world.

In this chapter we shall examine the Mongol rule in Uighurstan, the interactions between the Uighurs and the Mongols, and the marriage

¹ *World Conquer*, Vol. I, p. 44.

² *The Secret History*. p. 172.

relationship between the Mongol royal family and the Uighur Iduq-qut family in the 13th and 14th centuries.

The Uighur people took part in all of Mongols' three westward expeditions (1219-1223, 1236-1242, and 1253-1260) and were actively involved in the subsequent administration, financial management, and cultural construction of the growing Mongol empire. Many of them became high-ranking officials in the Mongol Yuan government, and according to the *Xin Yuanshi* (the New Yuan History), members from twenty-nine prominent Uighur clans became high-ranking officials and prestigious figures in the Yuan government.³ The best known of these were Gaochang Iduq-qut, Meng Susi, Xiaoyunshi Tuohulian, Halayihachibeilu, Qieshi, Lianshi, Guanshi, Xiban, Alihaiya, and Tatatonge. Igor De Rachewiltz has calculated a total of 469 Uighurs in the service of the Mongols from 1200 to 1368, and among them 89 were resident commissioners (Mong: darughachi).⁴

The marriage relationship between the Mongol imperial family and the Iduq-qut clan clearly indicates that the Chinggisd clan came to attach great importance to their relationship with the Uighurs, and in return, as members of the ruling class of the Mongol Empire, the Uighur Iduq-qut did their utmost to serve the Mongol rulers and to preserve the empire.

I must, however, point out that, although Chinggisi Khan adopted the ruler of Uighur state Barchukh Art Tegin as his "fifth son," the Uighur state never became the "fifth khanate," as has been suggested by some scholars.⁵ The Uighur state was not independent, but was a part of the Mongol empire. During the early Yuan dynasty, at least before the Princes' rebellions, the Yuan central government exercised a tight control over the Uighur state. Although the Mongol royal family maintained a marriage relationship with the Uighur Idu-qut family for almost a century, the women who were married into Uighurstan were not the daughters of Yuan Emperors, but were mostly the descendants of Ögödei Khan who had lost the throne to the descendants of Tolui, his younger brother. At the same time, although the

³ *XYS*, *juan* 29, pp. 121-27.

⁴ Igor De Rachewiltz, "Turks in China under the Mongols: A Preliminary Investigation of Turco-Mongol Relations in the 13th and 14th Centuries." In *China among Equals: the Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors 10th-14th Centuries*, ed. Morris Rossabi, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983. p. 285.

⁵ For example, Abe Takeo argues that the kingdom of Iduq-qut constituted a "fifth khanate, occupying a position next to the fiefs of [the Mongol] Emperor's four sons." See Abe Takeo, "Where Was the Capital of the West Uigurs?" in Silver Jubilee Volume of Zinbun Kagaku Kenkyusyo, Kyoto University (Kyoto, 1954), p. 435. Cited from Thomas T. Allen "The Yuan Dynasty and the Uigurs of Turfan in the 13th Century," in *China among Equals*, p. 249.

Mongol royal family continued to marry their Princesses to the Uighur Iduq-qut, not a single one of the Mongol Khans or Yuan Emperors married a Uighur Princess. Therefore, the marriage relationship between the Mongol royal clan and the Uighur Iduq-qut clan was one-sided, and although many Uighurs became influential in the Yuan government, they could not protect their own people from internecine struggles within the royal clan.

The Territory of the Uighur State and the Interactions between the Uighurs and the Mongols

The territory of the Uighur state underwent great changes throughout history. According to the standard Chinese sources, in 327 AD, in China's Eastern Jin dynasty (317-420 AD), an otherwise unknown man by the name of Zhang Jun established the Gaochang prefecture, which later became the Gaochang State.⁶ The Tang dynasty, under the second Emperor Taizong (r. 627-49), conquered the State of Gaochang, and set up there an administrative office called the Anxi Commandery. In 744, with the help of the Tang, the Uighurs subjugated East Turkistan and founded their own kingdom, with the Tang Emperor, Minghuang, granting the title of Huairen Khan to the Uighur ruler. From that time on, the Uighurs maintained a very close relationship with the Tang with each new khan recognized by the court, and four Tang Princesses married to Uighur Khans. Bayanchur Khan (r. 745-759) and Ay Tengrida (r. 759-780) helped the Tang Emperor Ming Huang pacify the rebellions of An Lushan and Shi Siming.⁷

Chinese sources on Uighur Khans are scarce. Only seven Uighur Iduq-quts have been recorded for the period of three hundred years from the 9th to the 13th centuries. They are: Zhihai (the Lion King), Heli, Biliege (Bilge Tekin 1126 - ?) Isen Tomur, Barchukh Art Tegin, Yuelutiemur, and Sangge. This information is supplemented by a 1992 work called "Uyghurlar" (The Uighurs) by Turghun Almas, where a list of sixteen Uighur Idu-quts has been provided from 850 to 1335.⁸

⁶ In the Yuan dynasty Mongol Princesses married into the Uighur Idu-qut family were titled "Princess of Gaochang," Iduq-qut rulers were titled "Prince of Gaochang."

⁷ Lin Gan, Gao Zihou, *Huihe shi*, Nei Menggu renmin chubanshe, 1994, p. 2.

⁸ Turghun Almas, *Uyghurlar* (The Uighurs), Kazakstan, Almaty, 1992, Volume 1, pp. 180 - 185, in *Uyghur, cyrillic script*. There are slight differences in the reign periods of the Iduq-qut from Chinese sources. Also this list does not include two Iduq-qut--Yuelutiemur, and Sangge.

TABLE 11: *Iduq-quts of the Uighur (850 - 1335)*

No	Reign Period	Iduq-qut	No	Reign Period	Iduq-qut
1	850–866	Pan Tekin	9	1246–1255	Salun Tekin
2	866–871	Boko Tekin	10	1255–1265	Oghrunzh Tekin
3	940—948	Irdimin Khan	11	1265–1266	Mamuraq Tekin
4	948–985	Arslan Khan	12	1266–1276	Qozhighar Tekin
5	1126– ?	Bilge Tekin	13	1276–1318	Nolen Tekin
6	? – ?	Isen Tomur	14	1318–1327	Tomur Buqa
7	1208–1235	Baurchuq Art Tekin	15	1327–1331	Sunggi Tekin
8	1235–1245	Qusmayin	16	1331–1335	Taypan

In 1128, during the reign of Bilge Tekin, the Uighur Kingdom became a vassal state of the Western Liao established by the Khitan. Originally, the Western Liao exercised only a loose control over the Uighur state, but soon started to extort excessive taxes and levies in the Uighur lands. In 1209, the Uighur Iduq-qut Barchukh Art Tegin ordered the death of the Khitan magistrate (*shangjian* 少監) in an attempt to free his people from the rule of the Western Liao. It just so happened that Chinggis Khan's envoys arrived at this juncture, and fearing retaliation from the Liao, he immediately sent envoys to Mongolia to express his willingness to acknowledge allegiance to Chinggis in exchange from protection. "As soon as I heard of your Emperor's awesome power and character, I immediately abandoned the old friendly relationship with the Khitans and was going to express my allegiance to you. I did not expect that Your Majesty's envoy would come to my humble country. From now on, I am willing to lead my people to be your subjects."⁹

In the spring of 1211, when Chinggis returned from the campaign against the Jin and was living in his temporary palace at the Kerulen River, the Iduq-qut Barchukh Art Tegin personally attended an audience with him and presented him with gold and jewels, asking Chinggis Khan to adopt him as

⁹ *YS, juan* 122, p. 3000. See the biography of Barchukh Art Tegin.

his “fifth son:” “If Your Majesty could bestow your favor on me and place me after your four sons, I would do my best to serve you.”¹⁰ Chinggis was impressed by his request and betrothed Princess Yeli Andun (Al Altun) to him and counted him as his “fifth son.”

The status of “Fifth son” was a most distinguished honour, as Barchukh was the only subject ruler to be treated in this manner,¹¹ but it was only titular. As Thomas Allsen has pointed out, if the Iduq-qut was actually and legally treated as the natural son of Chinggis Khan, then he might not have been allowed to marry his own sister, the daughter of Chinggis Khan.¹² According to Rashid Al-din, the wedding between Barchukh and Yeli Andun never took place because of the death of Chinggis,¹³ but, elsewhere, he mentions that it was because of the jealousy of his existing wife that Barchukh did not marry the Mongol Princess.¹⁴

When Ögödei Khan ascended the throne, he planned to marry the Princess who had been betrothed to Barchukh, but unfortunately for him, she died soon after.¹⁵ Juvaini’s record is in agreement:

In recognition of these praiseworthy services Chinggis-Khan distinguished him with extraordinary attentions and favours; and betrothed his own daughters to him. Owing to the death of Chinggis-Khan this daughter remained behind; and he returned to Besh-Baligh. When Qa’an¹⁶ ascended the throne, in fulfillment of his father’s command he betrothed Altun Beki upon him, but he had not yet arrived at Court when she died. After sometime Qa’an betrothed Alajin Beki to him, but before she was delivered up to him the idi-qut was no more. His son Kesmes then presented himself at court, became idi-qut and married Alajin Beki. After a short space the idi-qut Kesmes passed away; and at the command of Queen Toregene his brother Salindi took his place and was called idi-qut.¹⁷

Based on the accounts of Rashid Al-din and Juvaini, there were two Mongol Princesses who were betrothed to Barchukh, but neither actually married him. According to *The Secret History*, however, Princess Al Altun did marry Barchukh: “Chinggis Khan favoured the idu’ud and gave [unto

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Zhao Mengfu, “Quan gong shen dao bei,” in *Songxuezhai wenji*, juan 7: “let him become the brother of the Princes, and bestowed great favours on him.”

¹² Thomas T. Allsen: “The Yuan Dynasty and the Uighurs of Turfan in the 13th Century,” in *China among Equals*, p. 249.

¹³ *Shiji*, vol. 1a: 243-4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* vol. 1b: 92.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 1a:243-4.

¹⁶ Ögödei Khan.

¹⁷ *World Conquer*, Vol. I, p. 49.

him] Al Altun.”¹⁸ In the Table of Imperial Princesses of the *Yuanshi*, it states that the Mongol Princess married the Uighur ruler, “Princess Yeli-Andun, the daughter of Taizu, married Yidu-hu Barshu-Artedijin.”¹⁹ Chinese sources do not mention that Ögödei Khan betrothed Alajin Beki to Barchukh.

Mongol Rule in Uighurstan

Mongol rule in Uighurstan has been a controversial topic among scholars. In the following we shall discuss this issue and clarify some historical facts.

As suggested earlier, in the process of “conquering the world”, Chinggis Khan proclaimed a following distributional principle: “when we conquer the lands under heaven, we shall divide them among us and we shall enjoy the riches and honor together.”²⁰ However, the division of the Mongol Empire did not take place until his demise in 1227, when the Mongols had conquered vast lands in East and Central Asia, and the Middle East, and the empire was divided into four Khanates.

Sources available to us do not clearly indicate to which khanate the Uighur land belonged in the thirteenth century, and some scholars suggest that the Uighur state did not belong to any of the khanates of the empire. For example, Abe Takeo argues that the Uighur state was a fifth Khanate, and that Chinggis’ adoption of the Iduq-qut “signified more than anything else the securing of the territory ruled over by the adopted person.”²¹ Other historical sources do not support this point of view. Although it is not clearly stated to which appanage the Uighur land was assigned, sources of our possession strongly indicate that the Uigur lands were placed under the administration of the Yuan central government.

It is true that because the Uighur Iduq-qut, Barchukh Art Tegin, submitted to the Mongols on his own initiative, he and his successors were granted certain decision-making powers to govern their own people and land, and we know for instance, that the Uighur had the authority to appoint their own prime ministers, local governors (*dudu*), judges, and administrative officials of all levels of government. However, on the other hand, as a ruler of a vassal state, the Uighur Iduq-qut was obligated to send his son as a hostage to the Yuan capital, to pay tribute, and to participate in military expeditions whenever ordered to do so.

¹⁸ *The Secret History*, p. 172.

¹⁹ *YS*, juan 109, p.2757. See the Table of Princesses.

²⁰ *Yuan Dianzhang*, juan 9, Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1998. p. 302.

²¹ Abe, op. cit., p. 435.

In political term, Uighur Iduq-qut was a title directly conferred by the Yuan Emperor, and the Mongol central government remained the authority to change governors of the Uighur state if necessary. The Iduq-quts were also sometimes ordered by the Yuan Emperors to govern other parts of the Mongol Empire, which indicates that they were actually Yuan officials who were directly responsible to the Yuan Emperor. Thomas Allson has correctly assumed “the most plausible explanation is that the Uighur kingdom had its continuity guaranteed as a state directly subordinate to the Grand khan.”²²

The Mongol Khan also dispatched Resident Commissioners to the Uighur state. In 1223, during the first westward expedition, Chinggis Khan appointed *Darughachi*’s in the Uighur state,²³ and in 1274, the Yuan government appointed a judge in the Uighur state.”²⁴ In 1278, “for the first time, an Inspection Bureau (*Tixing anchasi*) was set up in the Uighur fief (*fendi* 份地).”²⁵ In 1283, four post stations and Exchange Notes Storehouses (*Jiaochaoku*) were set up in Uighur territory.²⁶

We may, therefore, say that the Uighur territory was one of the special administrative regions under the central government of the Yuan dynasty.

Mongol rule exerted great influence on the life of the Uighurs.

The Yuan government, for instance, set up post stations (*zhanchi*) all over their Empire, with the Uighur territory as one of the crucial hubs, and newly-unearthed Uighur official dispatches reveal the activities and functions of the post stations. For example, one of the official documents says “according to the order of Qacan Kuke, the provider should select a house from among the post horses in the town and provide it to envoys Qorlaxah and Swoiw to use for two days. These two persons will go there to arrange imperial wine.”²⁷ The post horses were often provided directly by the Uighurs without proper compensation from the government, and this became a heavy burden on the Uighurs.

Just as was the case, in Mongolia, the Uighurs were organized into various military units, such as “ten households” (*onlög*), “a thousand households” (*mīnglög*), and “a hundred households” (*yüzlög*). As the *Tongzhi Tiaoge* records, “according to imperial edict, for the people of Huihui and

²² YS, *juan* 1, p. 22.

²³ *Ibid*, *juan* 124, p. 3047, and *juan* 134, p. 3246.

²⁴ *Ibid*., *juan* 89, “Baiguan zhi.”

²⁵ *Ibid*, *juan* 10, p. 204. Here it is clearly stated that the Uighur territory had become one of the fiefs of the Mongol empire.

²⁶ *Ibid*, *juan* 12, p. 252.

²⁷ Kelake, “13-14 shiji Xinjiang Huhu shisu wenshu daoyan,” Bulumingdun, 1975, p. 444. Cited in Tian Weijiang, “Yuandai Xinjiang ‘zhanchi’ yanjiu,” *Zhongguo jianjiang shidi yanjiu*, 1(1994): 33.

Uighurs, no matter which prefecture and city they came from, as long as they live in that land, they all have the responsibility to provide post horses and to be menservants. The people belonging to ‘a thousand households’ and ‘a hundred households’ also have the responsibility act as menservants.”²⁸

One of the distinctive governmental systems of the Yuan dynasty was the *Cunshe* (village and commune). Since the sixth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1269), the Yuan government began to formalize this system both in cities and rural areas. In rural areas, a natural village (*cun*) was the basic unit, while in urban areas, every fifty households constituted a *she* (commune) regardless of their nationality. According to a study conducted by Shang Yanbin, this system was also adopted in the Uighur territory during the Yuan dynasty, indicating that Mongol rule penetrated into every corner of Uighur society.²⁹

Yuan Emperors frequently issued decrees to the Uighur local government. For example, in the seventh month of the thirteenth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1276), Khubilai issued a decree to the Uighur people: “imperial edict: ‘...when the women in the city of Huozhou (Khara Hocho) give birth to girls, they drown them in water. ...from now on, for those who drown their daughters in water, half of their property will be confiscated and given to soldiers. If the informer is a slave, he should be freed.”³⁰ Earlier, in 1272, Khubilai issued an imperial decree regarding disputes among sons for estate after a father died: “the Uighur people in the cities of the Uighur Iduq-qut always enter into disputes about their fathers’ estates. From now on, fathers should decide the distribution of family properties among sons, and sons should request their share according to the father’s will. A father’s will should not be disobeyed.”³¹ Here are instances where the Yuan Emperor issued imperial edicts directly concerned with female infanticide and the distribution of heritances in the Uighur cities, suggesting that the Yuan government in effect ruled the Uighur region. Therefore, the Uighur government during the Yuan dynasty was not an independent political entity.

²⁸ *Da Yuan Tongzhi Tiaoge*, *juan 2*, annotated by Guo Chengwei, Falü chubanshe, 2000. p. 10-11.

²⁹ Shang Yanbin, “Shilun Yuan zhongyang zhengfu dui Weiwuer diqu de tongzhi,” *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu*, 10 (March, 2001), No. 1. pp. 33-35.

³⁰ *Da Yuan Tongzhi tiaoge*, *juan 4*, p. 66.

³¹ *Ibid.*, *juan 4*, “Weiwuer jiasi (Uighur family properties),” pp. 56-57.

Imperial Marriages between the Mongol Royal Clan and the Uighur Iduq-qut Clan during the Yuan dynasty and the Political Involvements of the Uighur Iduq-qut in the Mongol Court

When Barchukh Art Tegin died in the early years of Ögödei's reign (1229-1241), his eldest son Qusmayin (Qieshi-maiyin, r.1235 – 1245) succeeded to the title of Iduq-qut. Qusmayin married the daughter of Ögödei, Alajin Beki, and when Qusmayin died in 1245, in the regency of Töregene (1241-1245), his younger brother Salun Tekin (Salun-dijin, r. 1246 – 1255) inherited his title.

Salun Tekin was involved in the political struggle of the Mongol court between Ögödei's line and Tolui's line, and Güyük Khan died in 1246, he made the mistake of fully supporting the descendants of Ögödei rather than Tolui in their claim to the throne. Following the order of Ohul Qhaimish, the widow of Güyük, he organized a force of fifty thousand soldiers to support Shiremün, the grandson of Ögödei.³² But his efforts were doomed to failure. Three reasons explain his political choice. First, he had been designated as Uighur Iduq-qut by Töregene Khatun, the widow of Ögödei Khan, and therefore he felt loyalty to the descendants of Ögödei.³³ Second, his brother had married the daughter of Ögödei, and they were bound by this marriage relationship; and third, as the territory of the Uighur state bordered on the territories of the descendants of Ögödei Khan, he intended to establish a friendly relationship with Ögödei's line to ensure border peace and to protect their own political interests. This political choice, unfortunately, resulted in a fatal disaster. Ögödei's line was defeated by the line of Tolui in both the political and military struggle and the khanate was finally transferred to Tolui's line. When Möngke Khan ascended the throne, he immediately moved to take revenge on the Uighur people.

According to the *Xin Yuanshi*, when Möngke ascended the throne in 1251, Salun Tekin went to the Yuan court to pledge allegiance to him. At that time, there was a rumor spreading in the Uighur state that because Salun Tekin, a Buddhist, was going to persecute all those who believed in the Tianfang (i.e. *Islam*) religion in the Besh-Baligh area. When one of his subordinates formalized a charge against him, he was sent to answer the charge, and Möngke ordered Manggesar to investigate the charge. Salun Tekin was declared guilty based on evidence said by some sources to be false, and was executed by his own younger brother, Oghrunzh Tekin, at Besh-Baligh, the capital of the Uighur state, together with many other Uighur

³² *World Conqueror*, Part One, VI, p. 48.

³³ *Shiji*, vol. 1a:244.

nobles.³⁴ Oghrunzh Tekin (r. 1255 – 1265), who was loyal to Möngke Khan, became the Iduq-qut. There seems little doubt that Möngke engineered the trial to wreak his revenge.

The *XinYuanshi* emphasized that “Xianzong (Möngke) hated the descendants of Taizong (Ögödei). Because of this incident, all the old supports of Taizong (Ögödei) of the Uighur state were driven away.”³⁵

When Oghrunzh Tekin died, his son Mamuraq Tekin (Mamula-dijin, r. 1265 – 1266) succeeded to the title of Iduq-qut, and raised an estimated ten thousand soldiers of *Tammachi*³⁶ troops, who, under the command of Möngke, attacked the Southern Song at Hezhou and the Diaoyu Mountain.³⁷ He died soon after this campaign, and his son Qozhighar Tekin (1266 – 1276) succeeded to the title of Iduq-qut in 1266.

During Qozhighar’s reign, the Uighur people suffered greatly in warfare, since from the mid-1260s, numerous Mongol Princes of the northwest began to struggle with the Yuan court both for land, and for control of the agricultural population. In 1269, the descendants of Ögödei, represented by Khaidu, along with the descendants of Chaghatai represented by Bala, as well as some descendants of Jochi, met at the Talas River to carve out of spheres of influence, and decided at the same time to fight together against Khubilai Khan. When Bala died in 1270, Khaidu unilaterally established Du’a, the son of Bala, as the new Khan in spite of Khubilai’s claim to the Grand Khanate. From 1272 to 1275, the rebel Princes Khaitu, who was the grandson of Ögödei, and Du’a, the great grandson of Chaghatai, frequently invaded Uighur lands. In 1275, after having defeated the Yuan troops commanded by Azhiji and Auluzhi, Du’a and Busiba led 120,000 troops to encircle Khara-Hocho (Huo Zhou), the largest of the Uigur cities. At that time, Khubilai was occupied in his attempt to conquer the Southern Song and was unable to send troops to lift the siege. Though Khara-Hocho was besieged for six months but did not fall, Du’a finally wrote a letter to Qozhighar, fastened it to an arrow, and shot it into the city. The letter read, “I am also the descendent of the Emperor Taizu [Chinggis]. Why do you not submit to me? Your great-grandfather married a Princess, and if you give your daughter to me, I will abort the siege. Otherwise, I will launch an all-out offensive.”³⁸ At that time, the city had run out of food, and the Iduq-qut

³⁴ *XYS*, juan 115, pp. 524-5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ A special army constituted of “*semu*” (assorted categories) people in the Yuan dynasty.

³⁷ *YS*, juan 122.

³⁸ From this record, we know that the Uighur Iduq-qut Barchukh indeed married the Mongol Princess.

decided to comply with Du’a’s request. He did not wish to meet Du’a personally, and thus put his daughter, Princess Yeliyiheimishi Beki, into a basket padded with thick mats and lowered her down the city wall. Du’a then withdrew his troops.³⁹

Under threat of this sort from powerful Mongol Princes from the northwest, Khubilai was determined to strengthen his defense capabilities in the Uighur areas, and in order to win the support of the Uighur Iduq-qut, he greatly enhanced the political position of the Iduq-qut. In 1270, he is reported to have told Korean king Wang Sik:

You [the Korean monarch] submitted later; therefore [you] are ranked low among the Princes (*wang*). During the reign of our Taizu [Chinggis Khan] the Iduq-qut was the first to submit, and accordingly it was ordered that he be ranked first among the Princes. Arslan next submitted, and therefore he was ranked below him [the Iduq-qut]. You should know this.⁴⁰

And we are also informed that Khubilai told other Mongol Princes that they should treat the Iduq-qut as a member of the Mongol royal family with the courtesy due to brothers.⁴¹ In addition, he resumed the marriage relationship with the Iduq-qut which had been suspend for nearly thirty years, and when Qozhighar Tekin first arrived at the Yuan court, he was publicly praised and was given handsome rewards by Khubilai. He was also permitted to marry Princess Babahar, the daughter of Güyük, and Ögödei’s granddaughter, and was granted 100,00 *ding* of cash to carry out relief efforts among his people.

It is interesting to notice that Khubilai did not marry his own daughter or any other Princess from Tolui’s line to the Uighur Iduq-qut. Instead, he selected a Princess from Ögödei’s lineage to marry the Iduq-qut. In fact, five out of the seven Mongol Princesses married to the Uighur Iduq-qut’s clan were from Ögödei’s line. Only Princess Wulazhen, who was married to Nolen Tekin (r.1276-1318) was the granddaughter of Khubilai khan. Khubilai must have been confident that the Uighur Iduq-qut was loyal to him and would not be influenced by marriage ties with Ögödei’s family. It is also possible that Khubilai intended to use the marriage tie to attempt a compromise with the descendants of Ögödei.

³⁹ YS, *juan* 122, p. 3001.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, *juan* 7, p.128.

⁴¹ Kaha-Balati, Liu Yingsheng: “Yiduhu Gaochangwang shixunbei Huihe beiwen jiaokan yu yanjiu,” *Yuanshi ji beifang minzushi yanjiu jikan*, No. 8.

However, although Qozhighar Tekin was favoured by the Yuan court, he found himself in several predicaments in the following years, and he died in 1276 in a battle with rebel Mongol Princes.

He had three sons: Nolen Tekin (Niulin-dijin), Qinchatai, and Xuexue Tekin. His eldest son Nolen Tekin was still young when his father died, but he immediately traveled to the Yuan court to request that Khubilai allow him to lead a troop to launch a northward expedition to avenge his father. Khubilai was so impressed by his ambition that he bestowed upon him ten thousand gold coins, and married him to Princess Bulughan, who was the granddaughter of Ögödei. Later after Bulughan died, he married her younger sister Babucha.

Throughout his life, Nolen Tekin received many honors from the Yuan court. When Tuosima of the Tufan rebelled, for instance, Khubilai issued an imperial edict to grant him the titles of Great Officer of Eminent Dignity (*Ronglu-Dafu*), and director of political affairs (*Pingzhang-Zhengshi*), and ordered him to lead ten thousand *Tammachi* troops from his own state to garrison Tufan. In 1308, he was ordered by Khaishan (Wuzong, r. 1307-1311) to return to his own state to succeed to the title of Iduq-qut and was granted a gold seal. Later Ayurbarvada (Renzong, r. 1312-1320) granted him the title of Prince of Gaochang with an additional gold seal. When Princess Babucha died, he married Princess Wulazhen who was the daughter of the Prince of Anxi and the grandson of Khubilai Khan.

During Temür Öljeitü's (Chengzong, r. 1295-1307) reign, the Yuan court actually lost control of the Uighur territories. The central part of Uighur state, including Besh-Balig and Khara-Hocho, was occupied by the rival Chaghatai *ulus*. Nolen Tekin set up a government-in-exile in Yongchang in Gansu, where he died in 1318.

Nolen Tekin had three sons. The eldest, Tomur Buqa (Tiemuer-buhua, r. 1318-1327) and the second Sunggi (Jianji) were born to the Mongol Princess Babucha, while the mother of the youngest son Taypan (Taipingnu), is unknown.⁴²

In the Dade era (1297-1307), Tomur Buqa married Princess Duorzhisman, the granddaughter of Crown Prince Kuoduan, after living in the Yuan court since the Zhida era (1308-1311) as an imperial guard, and assigned to serve the Empress dowager Daji. He was granted the title of Great Officer in Palace Attendance (*zhongfeng dafu*) and was placed in charge of the security

⁴² *Yuanshi*, juan 122 states that Nolen Tekin had two sons who were both born to Princess Babucha, but the *Xin Yuanshi* states that he had three sons. It does not state who was their mother (see *Xin Yuanshi*, Guofang Yanjiu Yuan, Zhonghua Dadian Bianyin Hui. (1966): 1323).

of the Yuan capital, Dadu. Later he was promoted to the position of Great Officer Endowed with Goodness (*zishan dafu*) and took up the post of General *Darughachi* in Gongchang.

When Nolen Tekin died, he returned to Yongchang and tried to resign the right of succession of the title of Prince of Gaochang to his uncle Qinchatai, but unsuccessful, he succeeded to the titles of Iduq-qut and Prince of Gaochang. In the Zhizhi era (1321-1323) he was in charge of the troops in Gansu in his own state, until Emperor Taiding (r. 1324-1327) summoned him to return to the Yuan court.⁴³ Here, he was ordered to garrison Xiangyang in Hubei and was so successful that he was granted the titles of Commander Unequaled in Honour (*kaifu yitong sansi*) and Director of Political Affairs of the Hu-Guang Province (*Hu-Guang Pingzhang zhengshi*). During this period he established a close relationship with Tuq Temür who later became Wenzong (r. 1328-1329). In 1328, when Tuq Temür went to the capital from Jiangling to claim the throne, he invited Tomur Buqa to go with him to aid him in the constant political struggles in the Yuan court. As Director of the Department of Military Affairs, Tomur Buqa played a vital role in the ensuing war between the Supreme Capital and the Grand Capital, and after his support for the winning side he was appointed to the position of Assistant of the Left in the Secretarial Council (*Zhongshu zuo chengxiang*) in 1329. Soon he was appointed to other important positions: the Grand Preceptor of the Heir Apparent (*Taizi zhanshi*) and Chief Censor (*yushi dafu*) among them. In 1329, under a new Emperor, Wenzong, he transferred the titles of Iduq-qut and Prince of Gaochang to his younger brother Sunggi (Jianji, r. 1327–1331) in order to concentrate on the government affairs of the Yuan court.⁴⁴

Tomur was a highly Sinicized Uighur Iduq-qut. He was deeply involved in the political life of the Yuan dynasty, playing important roles in several positions. His political career reached its apex during Wenzong's reign (1329-1332), when he became Chancellor of the Yuan court, but his career soon ended abruptly when the last Yuan Emperor, Toqon Temür, ascended the throne.

When Wenzong died, Toqon Temür, the son of Qoshila (Mingzong), ascended the throne in 1333. Previously, Wenzong had murdered his own brother, Mingzong, and sent Toqon Temür into exile. Therefore, when

⁴³ YS, *juan* 122, p.3002.

⁴⁴ The date when Sunggi succeeded to the title of Iduq-qut was recorded differently. In Chinese sources it occurred in 1329, but in sources from Central Asia it occurred in 1327. It is possible that Sunggi played a role as an Iduq-qut since 1327 when his elder brother was occupied with governmental affairs in the Yuan capital.

Toqon Temür ascended the throne, Wenzong's line suffered his revenge. As the favorite minister of Wenzong, Tomur Buqa was now in an untenable position, and was dismissed from office. Several years later, he was executed based on an unwarranted charge,⁴⁵ and later, his brother Taypan was also executed.

In 1331, Sunggi Tekin transferred his official titles to his younger brother Taypan (Taipingnu, r. 1331-1335), and when he died, his son Yuelutiemur inherited the title of Iduq-qut. Yuelutiemur was involved in suppressing a peasant uprising at the end of Yuan and died in Nanyang in 1353.⁴⁶ His son Sangge was allowed to inherit the title of Prince of Gaochang by the last Yuan Emperor, Shundi.⁴⁷ It seems that until the end of the dynasty, Yuan Emperors determined or confirmed the Uigur succession.

From Barchukh Art Tegin to Tomur Buqa, five Uighur Iduq-quts married seven Mongol Princesses. Among them, one Princess was the daughter of Chinggis Khan, five were the descendents of Ögödei Khan, and one was the great granddaughter of Khubilai Khan.

As far as we can tell, compared with the Mongol Princesses in other states such as those in the Korean court and the Öngüt court, these Mongol Princesses in the Uighur state seem to have been politically inactive. All of them remained obscure and left no traces in history. This seems to beg the question of whether the Uigur systems of governance and gender relations differed from those of the Koreans or the Öngüt. It is also interesting to note that although the Mongol royal family continued to marry their Princesses to Uighur Iduq-quts, none of the Mongol Khans or Yuan Emperors married a woman from the family of a Uighur Iduq-qut. Thus, even though the marriage relationship between the Mongol royal clan and the Uighur Iduq-qut's clan was one-sided, this marriage tie secured the loyalty of the Uighur Iduq-quts and facilitated Mongol Rule in Uighurstan.

⁴⁵ Tao Zongyi, *Nancun chuo geng lu*, juan 8, p. 104, Zhonghua Shuju, 1959. According to Quan Heng's *Gengshen waishi*, Tiemuer Buhua was killed in 1351. Luo Xianyou : "Yuandai Weiwuer Yiduhu puxi jiqi diwei bianqian," *Minzu yanjiu*, 2 (1997): 68-75.

⁴⁶ *YS*, juan 42, p. 899: "[Shundi] ordered Iduq-qut Yuelutiemur to command the Uighur troops, together with the Prince of Yu, Alatenashili, and the director of the Department of Military Affairs, Laozhang, to suppress the bandits in Xiangyang, Nanyang, and Dengzhou."

⁴⁷ *YS*, juan 43.

TABLE 12: Mongol Princesses Married into the Uighur Idug-qut’s Clan

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Yeli Andun		Barchukh Art Tegin (Uighur Idug-qut)	Chinggis Khan
Alajin Beki		Qusmayin (Eldest son of Barchukh Art Tegin)	Ögödei Khan
Babahaer		Qozhighar Tegin (Son of Mamuraq Tegin and great grandson of Barchukh Art Tegin, Uighur Idug-gut)	Güyük Khan
Bulughan (Granddaughte r of Ögödei)		Nolen Tegin (Prince of Gaochang)	?
Babucha (Granddaughte r of Ögödei)		Nolen Tegin	?
Wulazhen		Nolen Tegin	Ananda (Prince of Anxi)
Duozhisiman		Tomur Buqa (Prince of Gaochang)	Kuoduan /Köten (Ögödei’s son)

MARRIAGE LIST 9: Uighur Iduq-qut Clan and the Women of the Mongol Royal Family

1. Barchukh Art Tegin (r. 1208 – 1235).....(1)Yeli Andun
2. Qusmayin (r. 1235 – 1245).....(2) Alajin Beki
3. Qozhighar Tegin (r. 1255 – 1265).....(3) Babahar
4. Nolen Tegin (r. 1276 – 1318).....(4) Bulughan (5) Babucha (6)Wuluzhen
5. Tomur Buqa (r. 1318 – 1327).....(7) Duorsiman

CHAPTER ELEVEN

“One-way” Marriages: Royal Marriages between the Mongol Yuan and Koryŏ

The marriage relationship between the Mongol Yuan imperial family and the Koryŏ royal family in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was unique. It lasted for almost a century, and among the seven Koryŏ Kings from the so-called “Loyal and Stern” King (Ch’ungyŏl, 1275-1308), Wang Sim, to the “Respectful and Pitiful King” (Kongmin 1352-1374), Wang Ki, five of them married eight Princesses of the Mongol Yuan court.¹ Because of the marriage relationship with the Mongol Yuan imperial family, the Koryŏ court received special treatment from the Mongols which was deemed to be “unique among all the states.”² Throughout the period, the original Koryŏ political organizations and institutions were maintained: the Koryŏ Kings retained the authority to set up their own governmental structures, to appoint officials, and to exercise laws, and taxes were not sent to the Yuan capital but were for the consumption of the Koryŏ government. The Yuan court assigned senior officials (Mo. *Darughachi*) for defined periods of time to Korea as supervisors, and Rashid Al-din states that Korea was a province in name but was actually a separate state in the Yuan dynasty.³

This chapter will show that imperial marriage was employed by both the Mongol Yuan and the rulers of Koryŏ to secure their own political and military interests.

¹ They were King Ch’ungyŏl Wang Sim, the Loyal and Mighty King (Ch’ungsŏn, Wang Wŏn, r. 1309-1313), the Loyal and Decorous King (Ch’ungsug, Wang To, r. 1314-1330), the Loyal and Compassionate King (Ch’unghye, Wang Chŏn, r. 1331-1332), and the Respectful and Pitiful King Wang Ki. King Sim (Sim Wang) Wang Sung also married a Mongol Princess. Although he was not a Crown Prince, his position was equal to that of the Crown Prince, therefore he was entitled to marry a Mongol Princess.

² Yao Sui, *Mu’an Ji*, juan 3, “Gaoli shen wang shi xu.” Taiwan, Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1975.

³ *The Successors*, 7: 282, “Third—the *shing* (Chinese *sheng*, province) of Goli (Koryŏ) and___, which is a separate kingdom. Their ruler is called *yang* (Chinese *wang*, Prince/King). Qubilai Qa’an gave him his daughter in marriage. His son is one of the Qa’an’s intimates, but he is not *yang* there.”

Husband-Wife Relationships and Their Impact on Yuan-Koryŏ Relations

During the Yuan dynasty, Mongol Princesses were the *de facto* representatives of the Chinese court, and the relationship between the Mongol Princesses and the Koryŏ Kings had a great impact on the relationship between the two courts. If the relationship between husbands and wives was harmonious, or if the Mongol Princesses were able to effectively control the Koryŏ Kings and the Koryŏ government, and if the Koryŏ Kings were willing to accept this kind of control, then the relationship between the Mongol Yuan court and the Koryŏ court tended to be stable and harmonious. On the other hand, if the relationship between a particular Mongol Princess and a Koryŏ King worsened, or if the Mongol Princesses were unable to control the Koryŏ Kings, or if the Koryŏ Kings did not respect the Mongol Princesses or tried to cast off the control of the Mongol Princesses, then the Koryŏ court would lose the trust of the Yuan court. The Yuan court did not hesitate on one occasion to dethrone a Koryŏ King and replace him with a man who was more docile and obedient to the Yuan court. No matter what the case, Koryŏ Kings married to Yuan Princesses were regarded as sons-in-law of the Yuan Emperors and owed a filial duty to them.

King Ch'ungyŏl (r. 1275-1308) was the first to marry a Mongol Princess. Regarded as loyal and devoted to the Yuan court, he worked very hard to improve mutual relations, but at the same time, grasped every opportunity to better the interests of his state and people. He was therefore trusted by the Yuan court, and was also loved by the Korean people.

His son, Wang Wŏn (later King Ch'ungsŏn), apparently did not follow his example. He was born to the Mongol Princess, Khudulu Khaimish, the daughter of Khubilai Khan, and when King Ch'ungyŏl abdicated and handed over the crown to him in the first month of 1298,⁴ he must have hoped that his son would continue to form a close relationship with the Mongols and still protect the interests of Korea. We might also assume that the Mongol court believed that as a man of half Mongolian blood, Wang Wŏn would be loyal and obedient and easy to control. No one seems to have expected that this Koryŏ King would not only ignore the Mongol Princess chosen to be his wife, but would even refuse to make love with her. The Korean historians recorded, "It was said that since the King married the Mongolian Princess, he

⁴ KRS, I. 31:642-3. Jin Weixian, ed. *Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian*, p. 620. When King Ch'ungyŏl abdicated, the Yuan court granted him the title of "King of Enjoyment and Longevity" (*Yishou Wang*).

did not do his duty well as a husband. Instead, other concubines slept with the King and became pregnant, arousing much jealousy.”⁵ The same source goes on to tell us that the “arrogant” Mongol Princess refused to tolerate such neglect, and her first reaction was to pick quarrels and to stir up trouble for the Koryŏ King. She also sent messengers to the Yuan court, insisting that pressure be brought to bear to compel the Koryŏ King to do his duty, but she seemed unable to understand that she could not win the love of the Koryŏ King by force.

In response to her granddaughter’s plea, the Empress Dowager of the Yuan finally sent an envoy to try to persuade the Koryŏ King to mend his relationship with the Princess, but he was not moved. Jealousy and shame combined to propel the Princess to seek revenge, and she did so by conducting sexual liaisons with other officials in the Koryŏ court. In the beginning, the abdicated Koryŏ King tried to help the couple to improve their relationship, but since all efforts failed, and he knew that the Princess had become loose in morals, he decided to appeal to the Yuan court to remarry the Princess to someone else. Worried about the behavior of the Princess bringing disgrace to his family, fearing that if the Princess were to bear illegitimate children, the Koryŏ court would face a difficult situation, since the Koryŏ throne might be taken by an outsider because the son born of the Mongol Princess had priority to succeed.⁶ To avoid this awkward situation, the best choice, he believed, would be to get rid of this Princess by remarrying her to another man. In suggesting this, he was, of course, risking offense to the Yuan court because remarrying the Princess meant reducing her position in the Koryŏ court, which would not only humiliate the Yuan court, but also damage its marriage strategy. Therefore, after secret negotiations, the Yuan court decided to depose Wang Wŏn, and restore his father in the eighth month of 1298.⁷

King Ch’ungsŏn (r. 1298, 1309-1313) married two Mongol women. One was the Mongol Princess Botasirin; the other was Yesujin. Yesujin was not a Princess and is called “a Mongol woman” by Korean historians. But she gave birth to a son, therefore she was posthumously entitled “virtuous concubine”

⁵ *KRS*, III, 89:26-27.

⁶ For instance, King Ch’ungyŏ married Chŏnghwa who gave birth to a son named Kangyangkong Cha before he married Khubilai’s daughter Hudulujielimish. “Kangyangkong Cha was the oldest, but because he was not born of the (Mongol) Princess, he was not designated as Crown Prince.” Later in the fifth year of King Ch’ungyŏ (1279) he was even exiled to a far-off temple to “shun the Crown Prince.” (*KRS*, vol. 91. III, P. 57. See the biography of Kangyangkong Cha.)

⁷ *KRS* I, 31: 643-4.

(Üibi). It is not clear when she married King Ch'ungsön, but she died in 1316 in the Yuan court.⁸

King Ch'ungsug (r.1314-1338) Wang To, married three Mongol Princesses. The first Mongol Princess he married was Irinjinbala, the daughter of the Prince of Ying, Esen-Temür (Yexian-Tiemur). They married in 1316 when Wang To resided in China as a hostage, and in the winter of the same year, they went to Korea together. Three years later, the Princess died. The Yuan court was suspicious about the death of the Princess, and after the formal burial of the Princess was delayed for a year, the Yuan court sent envoys to Korea in 1321, to arrest a servant girl and the cook of the Princess to investigate her death.⁹ The cook admitted, "Last August when the King consorted with Tökbī in the Yangyöng Palace, the Princess was jealous, and she was beaten by the King until her nose bled. In September, the King visited the Yönhwa Temple, and he beat the Princess again."¹⁰ The cook and the servant girl were escorted to the Yuan court for further interrogation. If the death of this Princess was really the consequence of ill-treatment or even murder by the Koryö King, it would surely have been a disaster for Korea, and at this critical moment, several Koryö ministers collectively wrote an appeal to the Yuan court to defend the Koryö King and to charge the cook with making a false accusation.¹¹ Perhaps as a result of this appeal, the Yuan court abandoned the case, and for the next five years there were no Mongol Princesses in the Koryö court. In 1324, the Yuan resumed their former policy, and married Jintong (K. Kimdong), the daughter of the Prince of Wei, to the Koryö King Ch'ungsug when he was a hostage in the Yuan court. One year later, they went together to Korea. Unfortunately, this Princess had an even shorter married life. In 1325, when the Princess visited Dragon Mountain (*Yongsan*) with her husband, she gave birth to a son later named *Yongsan Wönja*, but shortly after the birth, died at the tender age of eighteen. In 1342, she was posthumously titled "Senior Princess of the State of Cao."

The second of King Ch'ungsug's Mongol wives was Princess Kyöngghwa, Bayan Khudu, recorded in the *Koryösa* simply as a "Mongol woman" without indicating her family background. However, since she had a royal title, she must have belonged to the Mongol Royal family, and according to Xiao Qiqing, she was the sister of Jintong, a daughter of

⁸ *KRS*, III, 89:27.

⁹ *KRS*, III, 89:26.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, 89:28.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, 89:28.

Amuge, the Prince of Wei.¹² She married King Ch’ungsug in 1333 in the Yuan court, but three years later, her husband died.

She was an active and influential woman with her own government office, but we are told that in widowhood, she was raped by her own stepson, King Ch’unghye, and humiliated, decided to return to the Yuan court. However, when she ordered her servants to buy horses for the journey to China, Ch’unghye tried to block her departure by banning all trade in horses, thus giving the Yuan envoys in the Koryŏ court an excuse to arrest the King and escort him to the Yuan court. At the same time, the Princess issued an order to arrest many other of his supporters.¹³

It is hard to understand why Ch’unghye had sexual relations with his stepmother unless it was because he tried to follow the Mongol tradition of levirate marriage. We suggest this possibility since we know that he was one of the most Mongolianized of the Koryŏ Kings, not only in dress and hairstyle, but also in conduct. The *Koryŏsa* records: “When the previous King (i.e. Ch’ungsug) was traveling to the Yuan...the King (Ch’unghye) went to greet him on the way using the Mongolian etiquette of kneeling. The previous King said: ‘Your father and mother are both Koreans, why do you salute me with “barbarian” etiquette (*huli*)?’”¹⁴ In fact, King Ch’unghye was not born by a Mongol Princess, but rather by a Korean woman who gave birth to King Ch’unghye and King Kongmin.¹⁵

In point of fact, King Ch’unghye had married a Mongol Princess named Irinjinbal (posthumously titled as Princess of Dening) in 1330, before he ascended the Koryŏ throne. This Princess was the daughter of Jiaoba, the Prince of Zhenxi Wujing. She gave birth to two children, one was a son named Wang Sin (Mongol name Basima Duorzhi), and the other was an unknown daughter. In 1344, the Yuan Emperor, Shundi, issued a decree to depose King Ch’unghye, and to put his eight-year-old son to the throne, though at the time, Irinjinbal was actually in control of the government. The boy-king died four years later, and the Yuan court continued to control the Koryŏ succession, ordering that Wang Sik (Mongol name Misijian Duorzhi), the son of Ch’unghye born to a concubine, to succeed to the throne. Wang Sik became King Ch’ungding when he was only twelve years old, and Princess Irinjinbal, his stepmother, still controlled the Koryŏ government

¹² Xiao Qiqing: “Yuan Li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin yu qiangquan zhengzhi”, in *Yuandaishi xintan*, Xinwenfeng Chubanshe, (1983): 239.

¹³ KRS, III, 89:28.

¹⁴ Op cit., I, 36:726.

¹⁵ When King Ch’ungsug married the Mongolian Princess, this woman was moved to another place because of the jealousy of the Mongolian Princess. But King Ch’ungsug still secretly met her. See KRS, III, p. 29.

during his reign, forcing him to abdicate in 1351. The Yuan court finally ordered Wang Ki, the brother of Ch'unghye, to ascend the throne. Wang Ki, who became King Kongmin and ruled from 1351 to 1374, was the last Koryŏ King who married a Mongolian Princess, and was probably the only Koryŏ King who truly loved a Mongolian Princess.

In 1349, Wang Ki married the Mongol Princess Botashirin, the daughter of Prince of Wei, Amuge, when he was a hostage in the Yuan court.¹⁶ The Princess was a devout Buddhist who did not have any children nine years after she married the Koryŏ King, and therefore she agreed to the suggestion of the ministers to select women for the King to bear sons. She was also loyal to her husband when, to escape a palace coup, he hid under a blanket in his mother's bedroom, while the Princess calmly sat beside the door to guard him. The Princess finally became pregnant in 1365, and King Kongmin was so pleased that he issued an order of general amnesty, only to be shattered when the Princess died in childbirth. So bereaved that he did not go to court for three days, he ordered all the governmental officials to wear mourning apparel, and he held a lavish state funeral for the Princess. The funeral arrangements were made according to the specifications of the Princess Supreme of Qi, Khudulugh Khaimish. In addition, he personally led all his officials in a memorial ceremony for the Princess specifying that it be accompanied by Mongol music.¹⁷

Mongol-Koryŏ Strife during the Thirteenth Century

As we have seen above, the royal houses of Yuan and Koryŏ were closely connected by marriage, but we should not forget that Korea suffered greatly from the warfare with the Mongols during the thirteenth century. Koryŏ survived as a relatively independent state by acknowledging the Mongol Yuan as its suzerain, but as a vassal state, was forced to fulfill specific duties, and obligations in order to preserve a degree of independence.

There were no borders in the thirteenth-century, and what is today's Mongolia was not originally contiguous to Korea. Since 1218, Mongol troops had, however, encroached on territory claimed by Koryŏ from the northwest. In 1216, the Khitan generals Qi Nu, Jin Shan, Tongguyu, Ya'er, Han She, who had all previously submitted to the Mongols rebelled in the east of Liao and then after suppression by Mongol troops, eventually retreated to Koryŏ and occupied the city of Kangdong. In December of 1218,

¹⁶ *KRS*, I, 38:754.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, III, 89:33-34.

the Mongol general Hechiwen, and general Wanyan Ziyuan of the Dongzhen state led a troop of thirty-thousand soldiers to Korea to suppress the rebellion. They sent envoys to the Koryŏ King, requesting Korea to provide the Mongol troops with provisions and funds. King Wang Chŏl agreed, and then sent General Cho Ch'ung in the northwest to lead a force to meet them with provisions. Kangdong was captured in the next year, but before retreating, Hechiwen swore an oath with Cho Ch'ung, “From now on, our two countries should become brothers forever. Our sons and grandsons of a thousand generations should not forget this.”¹⁸ The Koryŏ King was grateful and willing to pay tribute to the Mongols, but Hechiwen also said, “Your country is far from ours, and it will be too much trouble for you to travel. We will send no more than ten envoys to you every year.”¹⁹

The veracity of this report is dubious since Chinggis Khan's original purpose was to conquer Korea. He had previously declared, “the Holy Lord came here to collect tax and corvee,” and announced to the Koreans that “You must send tax and corvee to me, so that you may preserve your land.”²⁰

The relationship between the Mongols and Koreans, under these circumstances, could never be that of “brothers.” It is recorded in *Koryŏsa* that from 1219 to 1224 the Mongols demanded that Korea pay tribute on eight occasions,²¹ and for instance, in 1221, Chinggis Khan's younger brother, Otchigin, sent an envoy called Zhuoguyu to Korea, requesting a large amount of tribute, including ten thousand otter furs, three thousand bolts of fine silk, two thousand bolts of fine ramie, ten thousand *jin* of cottonseed, one thousand lumps of ink, two hundred brushes, ten thousand

¹⁸ MWESJ, 38, Shijie shuju, 1962.

¹⁹ Based on the records in *KRS* (Koryŏ History) and MWESJ, *juan* 38. But the record in the *Yuanshi* is slightly different, “Your country is far and travel if too difficult. You may send ten envoys every year to pay tribute.” I believe that the record in *KRS* is correct because during the following years the Mongols sent envoys to Korea every year to collect tribute. This duration of tribute payment was changed during Khubilai Khan's reign when Korea sent envoys every year to the Yuan court to pay tribute.

²⁰ “Solongyut”, which meant Korea according to the translation of Zhu Feng, Jia Jingyan. See *Han yi_Menggu huangjin shigang*, trans. by Zhu Feng and Jia Jingyan, Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, (1985): 20. There may be a mistake here. *Altan Tobci* states that Chinggis Khan took a Korean woman Qulan (Hulan), but according to *The Secret History*, Qulan was the daughter of Dayir Usun of the Merkit Tribe. See Francis Woodman Cleaves (trans.) *The Secret History*, p. 130. In the *Houfei biao* in *Yuanshi*, Hulan belonged to the second *Ordo* of Chinggis Khan, while there is an imperial concubine named Solangha in the fourth *ordo*. Suolangha means Korea. See *YS*, 106: 2695-96.

²¹ *KRS*, Chong In-ji tung ch'an. Seoul T'ukpyolsi: *Asea Muhwasa*, I, vol. 22, Kojong. (1972): 446-450.

sheets of paper, and many other items.²² The growing demands of the Mongols for tribute soon became a heavy burden on Korea, and thus enraged more and more Koreans. It happened in 1225, that the Mongol envoy Zhuoguyu was murdered by unknown assassins on his way home from Korea,²³ and when new envoys were sent to Korea to investigate the event, they were attacked by Koreans and had to return.²⁴ Chinggis Khan died in 1227 and for four years the Mongols did not send envoys to Korea.²⁵

Finally, in 1231, Ögödei Khan dispatched Mongol troops commanded by General Salita to punish Korea. The Mongol troops captured more than forty Korean cities, though they encountered fierce resistance, and the Koryŏ King was eventually compelled to submit to the Mongols in 1232. In the same year, the Mongol troops departed, but 72 Mongol senior officials were appointed to Korea's central, provincial, and county administrative units to supervise and control the Koreans. Mongol officials were placed above the Koryŏ officials, thus holding power over Koreans' lives and property. On behalf of the Mongol Khan, they frequently ordered the Koreans to pay large sums of tribute to the Mongols.

From the beginning, hatred towards the Mongols increased among the Koreans. In 1232, a powerful Korean minister, Ch'oe Yi, held the Koryŏ King under duress on Kanghwa island to "seek refuge from war," and shortly afterwards, in the sixth month of 1232, all of the 72 Mongol senior officials were disarmed and killed by Koreans.²⁶ In the eighth month of the same year, Mongol troops again commanded by Salita arrived to punish the Koreans.²⁷ Although the Koryŏ court remained safe on Kanghwa Island from the Mongol wrath, the Korean people were plunged into misery. Many cities were destroyed and the inhabitants of these captured cities were often massacred, even though the Koryŏ King wrote many letters to the Mongol general Salita to protest. During this period, internal struggles for the khanate in the Mongol royal family occurred frequently, leaving little time for the

²² KRS, I, 22: 447. See the eighth month of the eighth year of Kojong's reign.

²³ Hao Shiyuan believes that the Mongol envoys were murdered by the Dongzhen State because it had broken off relations with the Mongols, and attempted to control Korea to get its support to resist the Mongols. Thus it assassinated the Mongol envoys and shifted the blame on Korea, to sow discord between the Mongols and Korea. In addition, Dongzhen troops often disguised themselves as Mongols to attack Korean cities for the same purpose. See "Menggu dongzheng Gaoli gaishu," in *Menggushi yanjiu*, 2 (1986): 15-20.

²⁴ KRS, I, vol. 22, p. 451, 458.

²⁵ KRS 208: 4608.

²⁶ KRS, vol. 22. *Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian*, edit. by Jin Weixian, Shi Huo Chubanshe, (1983): 408. KRS 208: 4609.

²⁷ KRS 208: 4609.

war with Korea, and in fact, the court held out for twenty-eight years, though their isolation was perceived by their own people as cowardice, and their prestige was seriously damaged.

During this time, the majority of Koreans resisted tenaciously the attacks of the Mongols. They had killed the prominent Mongol general Salita at Ch'ŏin city in 1232, and this victory boosted their morale, though the costs were great. In 1254 alone, Mongol troops captured and deported more than 266,800 (Korean) men and women, and executed a number "beyond calculation," reducing every prefecture and county they passed to ruins.²⁸ Finally, the Koryŏ King Wang Chŏl found no way out but to send his son, the Crown Prince Wang Chŏn to the Mongol capital as a hostage in exchange for a Mongol agreement to withdraw from Korea. With this, the 28-year-old Mongol-Korean war ended.

In the fourth month of 1259, the Koryŏ crown Prince Wang Chŏn traveled to the Mongol court, and soon left the Mongol capital for Sichuan to pay a courtesy call on Möngke Khan who was based there commanding the Mongol troops whose mission it was to attack the Southern Song. When Wang Wŏn arrived at Liupan Mountain, he was informed of the death of Möngke Khan, and immediately made a clever decision, changing his journey southward to meet Khubilai with presents and appropriate protocol, thus making Khubilai happily surprised.²⁹ As a result, Khubilai invited him to join him on his march to Kaiping.

In 1259, three events occurred which were to influence Koryŏ-Mongol relations. Koryŏ King Kojong died in the sixth month. In the seventh month of the same year Möngke Khan died in the campaign against the Southern Song, and the next year Khubilai Khan ascended the throne in Kaiping. Mongol-Korean relationship entered a new era.

Principally because his personal relationship with Wang Wŏn, Khubilai changed the Mongol policy toward Korea from military conquest to control through conciliation. The Koryŏ Crown Prince, Wang Chŏn, had been a hostage in the Mongol court for two years, and had been treated badly by the Mongols, and even before Khubilai ascended the throne, his minister Zhao Liangbi, had advised Khubilai to treat Wang Chŏn as a foreign Prince with proper courtesy, and to send an escort with him back to Korea to succeed to the Koryŏ throne.³⁰ Khubilai accepted this suggestion, and Wang Chŏn (whose name was changed to Wang Sik) was escorted by Mongol troops

²⁸ *KRS*, "Kojong," Chong In-ji tung ch'an. Soul T'ukpyolsi : Asea Muhwasa, I, vol. 22, (1972): 488.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, I, vol. 25, p. 505-6.

³⁰ *Op. cit.*, vol. 25, p. 506.

back to Korea where he became King Wŏngjong in 1260. At the same time, Khubilai rescinded the punishment of Korea, and in addition, issued an imperial decree to Wang Sik before his return,

Now under heaven, only your country and the Song have not acknowledged allegiance to me. When you return home to govern your state, I hope you will clear up hatreds and dispel misgivings, demonstrate your benevolent rule, and bestow your favors on your people. You must aid and comfort your people in these hard times, moving your palace from the island to the mainland, and selling your swords to buy cattle. You should discard your weapons of war and take up hoes and ploughs.³¹

Soon thereafter, Khubilai complied with the requests of Wang Sik to withdraw his Mongol troops from Korea, and repatriate prisoners of war and refugees to Korea. Khubilai granted Wang Sik a royal seal and a document which approved Koryŏ's payment of tribute to the Mongols based on Korean resources.³² The Korean people were also allowed to maintain their traditional customs and clothing style.³³

At the same time, Mongol control of Korea became more direct than before. Prior to Proclamation of the the Yuan dynasty, Korea had paid tribute to Chinese imperial courts for many generations, and theoretically, China was the suzerain state, and Korea was its dependency. This relationship was based on the concept that China was the center of the world, and the Chinese Emperor was, in name, the universal Emperor of the world. China had never, though this is arguable, wanted to annex the Korean peninsula, and except for requiring Korea to follow some diplomatic protocols, never interfered in its internal affairs. Korea therefore, had been an independent state for generations, and it was only in the Yuan dynasty that the relationship between China and Korea changed to that of direct control.

The Yuan first sent *Darughachi* to Korea, and shortly thereafter, set up a "Regional Secretariat Council for Conquering the East (*Zhengdong Xing Zhongshu Sheng*)," to supervise the Koryŏ court, and for the purpose of conquering Japan. The Yuan also stationed garrison troops and opened horse-breeding grounds in Korea. Korea was responsible for paying tribute to

³¹ KRS 208: 4610-2. See "Gaoli Zhuan."

³² KRS 208: 4613.

³³ King Ch'ungyŏ (Wang Sim, r. 1260-1274) was greatly influenced by Mongol customs when he stayed in the Yuan court as a hostage. When he ascended the Koryŏ throne, he decided to adopt Mongol hairstyles, and ordered all the governmental officials to cut their hair according to the Mongol *qiechour*, cutting from the top to the forehead, making it in square shape, leaving some hair in the middle. See *Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian*, p. 519.

the Yuan court, helping the Mongol troops, setting up posts, and providing grains to Mongol troops.

Wŏngjong’s Marriage Proposal and Its Political Significance

By the year 1259, Korea had suffered greatly under the Mongol raids and invasions. The Koryŏ court had retreated to Kanghwa Island, leaving the Mongol mounted troops to pillage wantonly on the Korean peninsula. The court and country had become exhausted and impoverished, and thus, in 1259 the Koryŏ court formally submitted to the rule of the Yuan.

Although this ended the state-of-war, throughout King Ch’ungyŏ’s reign, from 1260 to 1274, the intervention of powerful military ministers prevented the Koryŏ court from following the orders of the Yuan court to “leave the water and go ashore” (*chu shui jiu lu*), that is, to return to its original capital Kaegyŏng from Kanghwa island.

In 1274 Khubilai mounted an invasion of Japan and was displeased with the failure of the expedition and began to regard Koryŏ as a half-hearted ally both against Japan and Song China. He thus issued many imperial edicts to the Koryŏ court, requiring it to fulfill its responsibilities as a dependency.³⁴ However, numerous Korean military ministers had always resented the Koryŏ court’s submission to the Mongols, and the most powerful of them, Im Yŏn, in the sixth month of the tenth year of Wŏngjong’s reign (1269) forced Wŏngjong to abdicate his throne to his younger brother Wang Chǎng. The Yuan court immediately dispatched troops to Korea and helped to restore Wŏngjong to the throne.³⁵

By that time, Korea was close to a state of total disintegration and prey to many factions. One of these, led by a Korean general, Ch’oe T’an, presented fifty cities in the northwest to the Yuan court, and they were immediately annexed by Khubilai.³⁶ Another faction consisted of the Korean élite who had retreated to Kanghwa Island and apposed to returning to the original capital. This factionalism had led to the so-called *Sambyŏlch’o* Rebellion, which lasted for three years from 1270 to 1272,³⁷ and in the Yuan court, some ministers suggested to Khubilai that he conquer Korea by military force and divide it into prefectures and counties.³⁸ In this situation,

³⁴ KRS, I, Vol. 25, p. 515-6. Vol. 26, pp. 523-4

³⁵ KRS, I, Vol. 26, p. 529.

³⁶ KRS 208:4615.

³⁷ KRS, I, Vol. 26, pp.535-36.

³⁸ KRS 208:4616.

Wŏnjong finally decided to sacrifice the sovereignty of Korea in order to obtain protection from the Mongols.

One of the means Wŏnjong chose was to establish a marriage relationship with the Yuan court. During the first month of 1270, he had a personal audience with Khubilai at Dadu, promising that he would return to the original capital Kaegyŏng from Kanghwa Island. At the same time, he requested Khubilai to marry a Princess to his son Wang Sim, “I sincerely ask your Majesty to marry a Princess to my son. Should we be fortunate enough to contract a marriage with you, my small state will rely upon you for ten thousand generations, and we will fulfill our duties with full hearts.”³⁹

Khubilai did not approve Wŏngjong’s request immediately. His excuse was:

According to the laws of the Dada,⁴⁰ two peoples should be connected by means of marriage and have contact with each other sincerely; so how can I not agree to your request? However, today you come here for something else, and it seems to me that your proposal is made in haste. When you return to your own state and have pacified your people, you may send a special envoy here, and then I will agree to your request. All my daughters have been married out, but I will discuss this matter with my brothers, and we will agree upon the disposition of your request.⁴¹

Obviously Khubilai knew the political motives behind Wŏngjong’s marriage request. Therefore, although he promised to provide support for him, he required that Korea first fulfill its duties as a dependency.

Wŏngjong did as he had promised Khubilai. In May, 1270, after having destroyed the forces of Im Yŏn, he finally returned to the former capital Kaegyŏng, and rapidly cooperated with the Mongol troops in pursuing and suppressing the *Sambyŏlch’ŏ* rebels. In 1271, he sent a special envoy to formally make an offer of marriage to the Yuan court, saying, “We humbly hope to receive your bounty and protection forever by this marriage relationship”.⁴² He also sent his son to the Yuan court as a hostage (Mo. *Turghagh*). Khubilai then agreed to allow his young daughter Khudulugh Kelmish marry Wŏngjong’s son, but since the Princess was only thirteen years old at that time, the marriage was postponed for three years. In 1274, Wang Sim married Princess Khudulugh Kelmish at the Yuan court. He was thirty-nine years old at that time, and one month later, when Wŏngjong died, Wang Sim returned to Korea to succeed to the throne, becoming King

³⁹ KRS, I, Vol. 26, 533-4.

⁴⁰ *Dada* refers to northern nationalities in general, and Mongols in particular.

⁴¹ KRS, I, Vol. 26, 534.

⁴² KRS, I, Vol. 27, p. 539.

Ch’ungyŏ. When the Princess and the Koryŏ King entered Kaegyŏng in an imperial carriage, “The people in the streets shouted in joy: ‘We never imagined that after the wars of one hundred years, we would see peace again.’”⁴³

According to the Koryŏsa, Khudulugh Kelmish was born to Asuzhen Khatun,⁴⁴ but this woman’s name is not listed under Khubilai’s name in the Tables of Empresses and Imperial Concubines (*Houfei biao*) in the *Yuanshi*, and we know that before her marriage, she was titled Princess Supreme of the State of Qi. (*Qiguo da zhang gongzhu*). Her marriage to Wang Sim started a new relationship between the Mongol Yuan imperial family and the Koryŏ royal family that lasted for almost one century.

Among the eight Princesses married into the Koryŏ court and the house of the Prince of Sim, only the Princess of Kyŏnghwa, Boyan Khudu, who was the Noble Consort of the Loyal and Decorous Prince, is called “a Mongol woman” in the *Koryŏsa*, and she is not counted as a Princess of Yuan. According to Xiao Qiqing it was recorded in the *Koryŏsa* that the Loyal and Decorous King had married the daughter of Prince Ying and later married two daughters of the Prince of Wei. One of the daughters of the Prince of Wei was Princess Supreme of the State of Cao, Jin Tong, and I believe that the other must have been Boyan Khudu. This implies that Boyan Khudu was also a Yuan Princess.⁴⁵

In summation, only two Koryŏ Kings during the Yuan dynasty did not have Mongol Princesses as their principal wives, and the reasons for this are clear. King Ch’ungmog (1345-1348) ascended the throne in his childhood and died when he was only twelve. King Chungjong (1349-1351) had to abdicate when he was fourteen years old because he was mentally deranged.

It is clear, therefore, that the pattern was essentially universal.

We should also note that the royal family in the Koryŏ period customarily followed a blood-relation (endogamic) marriage system. Rarely did they establish inter-marriage relationships with Koryŏ clans outside the traditional circle, and this meant that, early at least, the marriages were incestuous.⁴⁶ In 1275, Khubilai criticized the Koryŏ royal family’s practice:

⁴³ KRS, I, Vol. 28.

⁴⁴ KRS, III, vol. 89, p. 20.

⁴⁵ Xiao Qiqing, “Yuan Li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin yu qiangquan zhengzhi,” in *Yuandaishi xintan*, Xin Wen Feng Chuban Gongsi, (1983): 239.

⁴⁶ See Chong, Yong-suk, *Koryŏ wangsil chongnaehon yon’gu*, Soul: Saemunsa, 1988. For example, Kuangjong, Tojong, Wenjong all married their own sisters and conferred Empress titles on them. But they closely guarded the secret and announced to the public that they were from other clans. This marriage system was abandoned because of the interference of the Mongol Yuan court which clung to an exogamic marriage practice.

“The Wang families in your state marry people of the same surname. What is the reason for you to do so? Inasmuch as you and I have become one family, we should marry each other. Otherwise how can we say we are of the same family?”⁴⁷

But in the same decree Khubilai said: “You know that when my grandfather the Emperor conquered the thirteen states, their Kings vied with each other in presenting beauties, good horses, and treasures.”⁴⁸ The implication was very clear: the Korean King should present his “beautiful” daughter to Khubilai to symbolize his submission.

It seems to me that Khubilai initially had no interest in marrying his daughter to the Korean King. What he wanted to do was to follow the example of his grandfather Chinggis Khan by demanding the Princesses of defeated states in exchange for peace. For instance, in 1209, when the Mongol troops surrounded the capital of the Jin, the Emperor was forced to give his daughter, the Princess of the State of Qi, to Chinggis Khan in exchange for the withdrawal of the Mongol troops.⁴⁹ When the Mongol troops were attacking Xi Xia, the King of the Xi Xia was also forced to present his daughter to Chinggis Khan. But, when Chinggis Khan received the daughters of the enemies, he only temporarily postponed the attacks.⁵⁰

The Mongol treatment of the states or tribes whose leaders married Mongol Princesses was very different. Generally speaking, the reason for the Kings or tribal chieftains who enjoyed the special favor of marrying Mongol Princesses arose from the fact that they had submitted to the Mongols without resistance. The Ikires tribe, the Öngüt Tribe, and the Uighur Tribe all submitted to the Mongols peacefully and on their own initiative, and therefore, when their chieftains made marriage proposals to Chinggis, he readily agreed to marry his daughters to them.

It should also be noted that according to Mongol tradition, Princesses basically had equal political rights with the Princes, and the imperial sons-in-law were treated as members of the Mongol royal family. All of them had the right to attend the *quriltai*—the conference set up for the Mongol royal family and Mongol nobles to determine major issues of the Mongol Empire. Therefore, once a Mongol Princess was married into a state or a tribe, the

The Yuan court ordered the Koryō royal family to establish intermarriages with fifteen clans. Also see Wang Yi, *Menggu Yuan yu Wangshi Gaoli ji Riben de guanxi*. Taiwan, Shangwu Yinshuguan, (1973): 120.

⁴⁷ *Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian*. p. 524.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* P. 524.

⁴⁹ See the basic annals of Taizu of KRS 1:17.

⁵⁰ See *The Secret History*, (trans.) Francis Woodman Cleaves, Harvard University Press, (1982): 184-5. KRS 1:14-17.

relationship of this state or tribe with the Mongols was fundamentally changed. The Mongols would no longer treat it as hostile, and instead, its status in the Mongol Empire would be notably enhanced.

If we view Korea in this light, we will find that the Korean Kings and their people should not have been eligible to marry Mongol Princesses. They had been among the fiercest antagonists of all the Mongol conquests, like the Jin and the Xi Xia. Like them, Koryŏ had been forced to offer its own royal women to the Mongol court in order to obtain peace; but unlike them, the peace thus obtained was not simply a cunning tactic of the Mongols, an excuse to play a waiting-game, until they were ready to extinguish the state.

There was, therefore, something very special about the Mongol-Korean relationship, and we need to ask within our restricted frame of marriage politics, what was it that made the Korean case different. We are aware that Khubilai was not Chinggis, and that a half-century had passed between the Mongol extinction of the Jin and Xi Xia, and we are aware also of Khubilai's request in 1275 for a “beautiful” Korean Princess. Khubilai, we also know, had used the Korean peninsula for his first, unsuccessful, attempt in 1274 to invade Japan. We might thus consider that the Korean court was in a particularly precarious position.

It is also evident that it was an awkward matter for the Korean King to offer his daughter to Khubilai Khan. First of all, the Korean royal family had adopted an in-clan marriage system, and rarely had its Princesses married into other clans. Secondly, deeply influenced by Chinese culture, the Koryŏ royal family still looked down upon the Mongols, regarding them as barbarians. As King Taejo, the founder of Koryŏ, had suggested, “Our state in the east loves the Tang (Chinese) tradition. Our dress, style, etiquette, and music should all follow theirs...the Khitan, [however], is a state of beasts. Our customs are different from theirs, and our language is also different from theirs. Be careful. Do not follow them.”⁵¹

This cultural pride prevented the Koryŏ royal family from immediately agreeing to Khubilai's demand. Instead, as a compromise, they chose to select many beautiful young women to present to the Yuan court, and in 1275, Wŏnjong issued a decree to ban all marriages in Korea in order to

⁵¹ *KRS*, I, vol. I, p. 55. Even when Mongol troops had already occupied parts of Korea, the Koryŏ court still showed their contempt of Mongol culture. When the Duke of Ankyong, Wang Ch'ang, returned from Mongolia, he did not want to see his father, the Koryŏ King Kojong, simply because “I have been contaminated by the foul smell of mutton for a long time. Please allow me to see you after one night.” But the King ordered him, “Burn all the clothes you are wearing, wear new clothes, and come immediately.” (see *KRS*, vol. I, p. 20)

select beautiful virgins to send to the Chinese (Yuan) court.⁵² This was not unprecedented, but by following a tradition, dating at least from the Tang dynasty, the Koryŏ court was acknowledging the legitimacy of the Mongol rule. Even though many Chinese Emperors had taken Korean women as Imperial concubines, they had never married their daughters into the Koryŏ royal family. This exchange of women, perhaps unwelcome to the Koryŏ court showed a shrewd diplomacy on their part. The “family connection” protected Koryŏ.

One may wonder whether or not this was a triumph for Korean diplomacy.

The political significance of the royal marriages between the Yuan and Koryŏ courts seems obvious: they were relationships between a ruler and the tributary. The purpose of the Yuan court’s marrying their Princesses into the Koryŏ court were done to effectively control it, and the expectation of the Yuan court was that its women would exercise significant political power. The Koryŏ court’s offer of marriage to the Yuan court was initially to seek peace and protection from the Mongol Yuan dynasty in circumstances of domestic troubles and foreign invasions. At the same time, however, it intended to raise its position in the world order of the Yuan dynasty by taking advantage of this relationship. The marriage relationship was on the surface, unequal since it reflected the unequal relationship between the Yuan court and the Koryŏ court. On a deeper level, the character of the marriage relationship between the Yuan and the Koryŏ court cannot, in spite of Yuan wishes, be described as that of *Heghin*, the old policy of using a Chinese Princess to “civilize” the barbarians.

The marriage relationships between the Yuan court and the Koryŏ court, in fact, was one-sided. Although the Mongol Yuan court continuously injected its Princesses into the Koryŏ court, it never took the Princesses of the Koryŏ royal family as Empresses or Precious Consorts (*guifei*). It is true that in the Yuan dynasty, Korean women were famed for their gentleness and loveliness, and many officials took Korean women as wives, concubines, or maidservants,⁵³ and it is also true that the Yuan court also issued many imperial edicts to the Koryŏ court, ordering them to present young women to the Yuan imperial court. Many Korean officials also presented women to the Yuan of their own accord. This traffic in women happened every year according to the Korean historian Yu Kye.⁵⁴ In 1307, the Koryŏ court issued

⁵² op. cit., 28, p. 569.

⁵³ Ye Ziqi, *Cao mu zi*, Zhonghua Shuju, (1959):63, “The maidens employed by northerners had to be Korean ...without this they will not be regarded as officials.”

⁵⁴ “[Korea] did this (presenting virgins and eunuchs to the Yuan court) every year either in response to an imperial decree or on a voluntary basis.” See Yu Kye (1607-1664): *Yosa*

a decree: “girls under sixteen and above thirteen should not marry without authorization. They must first be reported to the government, before they can marry. Those families who violate this ban will be [considered] criminal.”⁵⁵

What is most unusual is that, some of the Korean women in the Yuan court were ranked among the Empresses and Imperial Concubines in the *Yuanshi*. Among them, Qi Shi (K. Ki Sa) Wanzhe Hudu, the Empress of Shundi (Toghon Temur, r. 1333-1368) was the most famous.⁵⁶ None of them originated from the Koryŏ royal family, and they seem to have been despised in the Yuan court even when they had become Imperial Consorts. It is said that Khubilai had declared a family rule to “despise Korean women, and not to allow them to enter the palace.”⁵⁷

chegang: [23 kwon/Yu Kye ch'an]. Sour: Asea Munhwasa, Han'gukhak kojŏn ssiriju. kwon 17, (1973): 390.

⁵⁵ KRS 32:667. The Koreans were so perturbed that “when Koreans had girls they kept it secret. They were still afraid that the secret would be divulged, even their neighbors were prevented from seeing the girls. Whenever envoys came from China, the Koreans would be alarmed, and talked to each other: ‘Why do they come? Do they come to take virgins?’” KRS 109:389. See the biography of Yi Kok.

⁵⁶ Empress Wanzhe-hudu, Née Qi, was a Korean woman who played a very important role in the politics of the late Yuan period and has been blamed for the destruction of the Yuan dynasty.

Her family was of very low origin, and she came to the Yuan palace only as a maidservant. Initially, she was mainly responsible for serving Shundi with tea. She is said to have been very clever and crafty, and gradually gained the favour of Shundi. Empress Dana-shili was jealous of her, flogged her, and often insulted her. When Empress Dana-shili was executed, Shundi planed to designate Qi as the Empress, but the then chancellor, Boyan, so strongly opposed this idea that Shundi had to give it up, and instead married an Onggirat woman Boyan-hudu as his principal Empress. After Boyan was dismissed from the chancellor's position, Shundi designated Qi as the second Empress.

According to a Yuan scholar Quan Heng, the author of *Gengshen waishi*, Khubilai had decreed a domestic rule that his descendants should never take Korean women into the palace. This was actually not true, because Khubilai himself had issued a decree to the Koryŏ King, ordering him to present his daughter to him as a sign of submission to Mongol rule, but as far as we know, the Koryŏ King never presented his daughter to the Yuan emperor. Instead, he selected many beautiful Korean young women to present to the Yuan court, and he even had to ban all marriages in Korean territory in order to select the most beautiful virgins. It was not clear whether Khubilai himself received any Korean girls into his palace, but at least in the reign of Wenzong (r. 1329-32) Korean women were seen frequently in the Yuan palace. Zhao Yi records in *Ershier shi zhaji*: “It was the practice to select Korean girls in the Yuan dynasty. Wenzong once granted a Korean woman, Buyan-tieni, to the chancellor Yakete-mur (Yantie-mur)....” Therefore the house rule of Khubilai might only have prohibited a Korean woman from becoming a Mongol Empress.

⁵⁷ Quan Heng, *Gengshen waishi*, the first year of the Yuantong era. This order obviously was not followed by the descendants of Khubilai.

This particular rule is in need of further examination. What special “charm” enabled the women of Korea to rise so high? Sadly, we must leave this to further discussion.

Mongol Princesses in the Koryŏ Court

The Princesses of the Mongol Yuan had the highest status in the palace chambers of the Koryŏ court. Whether or not the Koryŏ King/Prince had wife/wives, as soon as he married a Princess of the Yuan court, he had to place her into the position of his principal wife. Any son born by a Mongolian Princess was first in line to be the crown Prince regardless of his age. For example, one year after Khudulugh Kelmish was married into the Koryŏ court, there occurred a serious conflict among the Mongol Princess, the Koryŏ King, and his other wife Chŏnghwa. When Khudulugh Kelmish gave birth to a son, Chŏnghwa went to express her congratulations, and a maidservant organized a banquet in the East Hall, the traditional site of a crown Prince. The Koryŏ King said: “It would be better to sit in the central hall.” In response, the maidservant placed a low seat for Khudulugh Kelmish in the central hall. The Mongol Princess was very angry because she believed that this arrangement of the seating made her only the equal of Chŏnghwa. Therefore she ordered the maidservant to move the banquet to the West Hall because there existed a higher seat for her there. The Koryŏ King was unhappy about this change, and when he looked at the Princess during the banquet, she said: “Why do you look upon me with disdain? Are you not going to order Chŏnghwa to kneel down in front of me?” Then she angrily ordered the banquet suspended, saying: “I must go to my son’s proper place.” She ordered her servants to prepare the carriage, but the Koryŏ King beat the servants with a cane. The wet nurse of the Mongol Princess also said to her: “If you insist on leaving, I must die here.” And she gripped her throat. The Mongol Princess then agreed to stay.⁵⁸

This anecdote indicates that the Mongol Princess was extremely sensitive about her superior position in the Koryŏ court. She believed that she had the absolute right to be the first wife of the Koryŏ King and that her position could not be challenged. It suggests also the resistance of the Koryŏ King, though the resistance was impotent and unsuccessful.

I am, however, not convinced that while Korean historians describe the arbitrariness of the Mongol Princess and the “helplessness” of the Koryŏ King, that this is anything more than historiographical convention.

⁵⁸ *KRS*, vol. 89, III, p. 20.

Another story tells of the same Princess who took a small golden pagoda from a temple to melt it down for her own purpose. "The King was unable to stop her. All he could do was weep."⁵⁹ On another occasion, the Koryŏ King and his Mongol Consort were going to visit a temple. The King arrived early, and when his consort arrived, she found that only a small retinue was there. She was angry and immediately decided to return. The Koryŏ King could do nothing but blame one of the retinue for not summoning more people to come. When they arrived at the temple, the Princess became angry again because her husband did not wait for her, so that they might enter the temple together, and she struck him with a cane, "scolding him and beating him."⁶⁰

In spite of what seems a stormy relationship, this couple maintained a close enough connection that the Mongol Princess gave birth to three children for the Koryŏ royal family. She might have given birth to more children if Khubilai had not sent them a doctor captured from the Song named Lian Texin, who was famed for his skill at concocting aphrodisiacs, and therefore was requested and favored by the Koryŏ King and his Mongol Princess. A Korean minister by the name of O Yunpu believed that this kind of medicine was harmful to conception and pointed out this fact but his view was disregarded. The Mongol Princess gave birth to three children in quick succession, but when the Koryŏ King accepted the prescription of the Chinese doctor, she never became pregnant again.⁶¹

This couple visited the Yuan court together many times, and Khubilai always gave banquets to welcome them.⁶² The Princess brought her son and daughter to visit the Yuan Empress Chabui, who loved the boy and bestowed upon him a knife and wine utensils. The wife of the Yuan crown Prince even gave him a Mongolian name, Yizhili-Puhua.⁶³ In 1295, Chengzong ascended the throne as the second Yuan Emperor, and as a sign of favor to Korea, he granted the title, Princess of Anping, to Khudulugh Kelmish. In 1297, she and her husband visited the Yuan capital together and remained there "for a long period." In 1298, when the Koryŏ King was about to return to Korea, Emperor Chengzong honored them with a visit to their own residence. At the banquet the Princess sang songs and the Koryŏ King performed dances. This was the last time they visited the Yuan capital together. In the fifth month of

⁵⁹ *KRS*, vol. 89, III, p. 21.

⁶⁰ *KRS*, Vol. 89, III, p. 22.

⁶¹ *KRS*, Vol. 89, , III, p. 24.

⁶² *KRS*, Vol. 89, , III, p. 22.

⁶³ *KRS*, Vol. 89, III, p. 22.

1298, they returned to Korea. Shortly after, she fell ill and died, at the age of thirty-nine years old.⁶⁴

Political Involvement of Mongol Princesses in Koryŏ

The scholar, Morris Rossabi suggests that Khubilai's daughters did not play a role in politics:

Unlike the powerful Mongol women starting with Chinggis' mother Hö'elun to Khubilai's wife Chabui, Khubilai's daughters did not have a role in political decisions. Perhaps they were influenced by Chinese cultural standards which imposed severe restrictions on women. To rule the Chinese inevitably required adoption of some Chinese attitudes and practices, and such Sinicization meant less political influence for and additional restraints on women. On the other hand, it may simply be that Khubilai's daughters lacked any interest in politics.⁶⁵

However, in view of the political involvement of the Mongol Princesses in Korea, these claims seem less than true. Although there was no formal specification for political authority of Mongol Princess in the Koryŏ court, they played very important roles not only in the Korean palace chambers but also in the Korean government. Their power seems to have arisen simply from their status as Yuan Princesses.

To begin with, Koryŏ Kings and their native concubines were forced to take their advice and often to yield to them. According to most sources, the Mongol Princesses even had the power to arrest Korean officials and Korean King's other wives.

A good example occurred in the twelfth month of the second year of King Ch'ungyŏl's reign (1276), when Khudulugh Kelmish received an anonymous letter, saying that King Ch'ungyŏl's first wife, Chŏnghwa had placed a curse on her,⁶⁶ and that forty-three persons led by Kim Pang-gyŏng were planning to rebel by returning to Kanghwa Island. The Princess immediately arrested Chŏnghwa, and ordered the Mongol *darughachi* (commandant) to arrest Kim Pang-gyŏng and the others. In response, the Korean Chief-minister and other officials begged to see the Princess, and kneeling before her, said,

⁶⁴ KRS, Vol. 89, III, p. 24.

⁶⁵ Morris Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family", P. 172.

⁶⁶ According to the short biography of Chŏnghwa in KRS, Chŏnghwa lost the favor of the Koryŏ King after he married the Mongolian Princess. She was forced to live in a separate dwelling, and was never allowed to sleep with the King again. Therefore her jealousy was natural. See KRS, III. vol. 89, p. 25.

In recent years, powerful ministers have been controlling state power. If someone accused another person of criminal behavior, they did not investigate whether it was true, and instead, immediately executed the accused. Therefore people felt unsafe. They did not know when they would be killed. August Heaven cared for us and helped us to get rid of these evil ministers, and let you come to the east. We all thought there would be no more disasters. We did not expect that today it would happen again.⁶⁷

They made haste to vindicate themselves, with tears running down their faces. The Princess was moved and convinced by their words, and ordered the release of most of them, but kept Chŏnghwa and the chief-minister in prison. Later because of the sincere pleas of a Korean minister, the Princess decided to release them all.

This event enables one to understand how powerful the Mongol Princesses were in the Koryŏ court. Their powers were obviously above the Koryŏ Kings. The Koryŏ Kings were controlled by the Mongol Princesses because the latter were trusted by the Yuan court to jointly govern Korea, and they actually represented the Yuan court.

The Mongol Princesses from the beginning, were involved in the political affairs of Korea. Previous female involvement in Korean politics awaits a full study, but it seems fair to say that the open flaunting of power by these Princesses was unprecedented. The Mongol Princesses asserted a right to take part in imperial meetings, banquets, tours of inspection, hunting, and the reception of foreign guests. They seemed able to appoint and remove officers as they wished without the approval of Kings. There are instances where they could even reverse the decisions made by the Koryŏ Kings. This involvement in Korean political affairs was often encouraged by the Yuan court, especially in matters related to the Yuan interests.

In 1291, when a Mongol general, Xue Dugan, visited the Koryŏ court, King Ch'ungyŏl and his Mongol Princess Khudulugh Khaimish entertained him at a state dinner. The Mongol Princess sat in the central seat, the Koryŏ King sat to her left, and the Mongol general to her right.⁶⁸ This seating arrangement seemed to indicate that the political position of the Mongol Princess was even higher than the Koryŏ King!

Therefore, the Koryŏ governmental system under the control of Mongol Yuan may be described as the joint rule of Koryŏ Kings and Mongol Princesses.

⁶⁷ Yu, Kye (1607-1664): *Yosa chegang*: [23 kwon/Yu Kye ch'an]. Sour: Asea Munhwasa, 1973. p.338.

⁶⁸ *KRS*, III, vol. 89, p. 24.

Khubilai recalled the *Darughachi* from Korea four years after his daughter married into the Koryŏ court,⁶⁹ which might indicate that he believed that the Princesses could better safeguard the interests of the Mongol Yuan and supervise the Koryŏ court.⁷⁰

However, we might also suggest that the interference of the Mongol Princesses in Korean political affairs was not entirely negative to Korea. On one occasion, when the Koryŏ King, Wang Sim, invited the Mongol Princess Khudulugh Kelmish to go sightseeing and hunting, she reprimanded him, “You know only how to make merry. What about your state affairs?” The Koryŏ King was ashamed, and because he had used fire to hunt animals, and in so-doing, had burnt peasants’ crops, he had to compensate them for their losses. The Princess said, “The common people have been disturbed too much, and your followers are tired too. Why do we not return home?”⁷¹

Wang Sim also loved music, and often ordered musicians to play music for him. The Princess said: “I have never heard of a King who can use music to run his state.” And she ordered the dismissal of the musicians.⁷²

With regard to cultural identity, we find little evidence that these Princesses assimilated to Korean practice. They were condemned by later Korean commentators as arrogant, jealous, sexually monopolistic and irritable in the Koryŏ court, and in some cases. These charges are at least partially true. When Khudulugh Kelmish learned that a Korean general, Kim Chung-kyŏng had presented a beautiful girl to her husband, King Ch’ungyŏl, she immediately had the general arrested and put in prison.⁷³

Some of the Mongol Princesses are also said to have been unconventional and unstrained in sex. The Mongol Princess, Botashirin, had had a bad marital relationship with her husband, King Ch’ungsŏn, Wang Wŏn, whom she had married when he was a hostage in the Yuan capital in 1296. Two years later, in the first month of 1298 she went to Korea with her husband, and soon found that he began to treat her coldly because he loved his other wife Chobi. In the fifth month of 1298, the Princess wrote a letter in Uighur script to the Empress Dowager of the Yuan, complaining that Chobi had placed a curse on her and that the Koryŏ King did not love her anymore.

⁶⁹ Yu, Kye (1607-1664): *Yosa chegang*, 1973. P. 342, “In the seventh month (of the fourth year of Wŏngjong), the Yuan dismissed the *darughachi* of our state and the garrisons in the capital.”

⁷⁰ Ikeuchi Hiroshi Kōrai ni Chūzai Shita Gen no Darugachi ni Tsuite *ōyō gakuho* dai 18-kan (1929): 277-283. Quoted in “Yuan Li Guanxi zhong de Wangshi Hunyin yu Qiangquan Zhengzhi”.

⁷¹ *KRS*, III, vol. 89, p. 23.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *KRS*, III, vol. 89, p. 24.

The Koryŏ King worried about this and sent an official to ask the Princess about what she said in the letter. The Princess refused to tell, and ordered her retainers to beat the messenger. Although her father-in-law, King Ch'ungyŏl, tried to calm her anger, even bribing her followers with treasures and women, she still sent messengers to the Yuan court to complain. The situation escalated when someone posted an anonymous letter on the gate of the palace, saying that the mother of Chobi had cursed the Mongol Princess, causing the Koryŏ King to withdraw his love for her. The Princess immediately had Chobi's mother arrested along with her family, including her husband, her son, daughter, and son-in-law.⁷⁴

The Yuan court took this matter so seriously that it sent more than one hundred imperial envoys led by its Chancellor of the Right, Alihui, and the Assistant of the Left in the Secretarial Council, Yang Yanlong, to Korea. They arrested Chaobi and her parents and sent them under escort to the Yuan court. The Empress Dowager of the Yuan then sent five Western monks and two Taoist priests to Korea to ward off the curses on the Princess and sent another envoy to negotiate with the Koryŏ King, urging him to mend his relationship with the Princess.⁷⁵ After it became apparent that all their efforts were in vain, the Yuan court finally decided to remove the Koryŏ King from his throne. His father, King Ch'ungyŏl, was restored to power and given the title of King.⁷⁶

This is perhaps the ultimate indication of “Princess Power.”

An interesting sidelight on this affair is the *Koryŏsa* suggestion of its sexual overtones. “The Princess was usually promiscuous and often had sex with many court officials.”⁷⁷ King Ch'ungyŏl then planned to remarry the Princess to a handsome man, known as the Marquis of Sŏyŏ. He first sent this man, disguised in black clothing to the Princess to spend several nights with her, and since she seemed satisfied with her new lover, the King sent an envoy to the Yuan court in 1301, asking permission to remarry her to him. This request was seen by many as too outrageous even for the “lax morals” of the Yuan court, and the envoy did not dare to present it to the throne, and returned to Korea instead.⁷⁸

From all that we have said above, it seems clear that both China and Korea suffered discrimination by the Mongols. Initially, the Koreans and

⁷⁴ KRS, III, vol. 89, p. 26.

⁷⁵ KRS, III, vol. 89, p. 23.

⁷⁶ KRS, I, vol. 31, p. 643-4.

⁷⁷ KRS, III, vol. 89, p. 27.

⁷⁸ Jin Weixian (ed.) *Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian*. Taipei: Shi Huo Chubanshe, 1983. PP. 637-38.

northern Chinese were both placed in the third rank among the national classes in the Yuan dynasty,⁷⁹ and to alleviate this disadvantageous situation, the Koryŏ royal family developed a new strategy, and accomplished a breakthrough by establishing an unprecedented marriage relationship with the Mongol Yuan royal family, giving themselves and their people a higher, though formally unacknowledged status.

Mongol Princesses marrying into the Koryŏ court changed the relationship between these two countries. The marriages enhanced the political status of the Koryŏ royal court in the Mongol Empire, and as imperial sons-in-law, the Koryŏ Kings were entitled to have a say in the political affairs of the Mongol Empire. Previously Korea was only one of the many foreign countries subject to the Mongol Yuan. The relation between them was no more than that between a suzerain and a dependency. After the imperial marriages, the relationship between them became that of relatives. The Koryŏ Kings had previously been reluctant to have personal audiences with Yuan Emperors. But after the marriages, they were presented almost every year in the Yuan court with the Mongol Princesses. King Ch'ungyŏl explained the significance of this activity as follows: "going to have an audience with the Emperor is the etiquette of a Prince's pledge of loyalty to the Emperor. Paying a visit to her parents is the etiquette of a woman serving her parents."⁸⁰ The Yuan court's attitude towards the Koryŏ court also changed dramatically. When King Ch'ungyŏl first visited the Yuan court in 1278 after he married the Yuan Princess, the Yuan Empress sent Princes, Princesses, and Noble Consorts to the outskirts of the capital to welcome them. Besides the formal meeting with the Emperor, Khubilai also instructed him on how to govern his country.⁸¹

As the Emperor's sons-in-law, the Koryŏ Kings generally enjoyed a higher position than others in the Great Mongol Empire. This was indicated by the seating order at the imperial banquets in the Yuan court. In 1294 King Ch'ungyŏl was seated seventh at the imperial banquet⁸² in the presences of all the other Mongol Princes. In 1300, he was seated fourth. Korean historians regarded this as a "distinctive favor."⁸³

⁷⁹ The Mongols belonged to the first class, the "varied peoples" (*semu*) the second class, the Northern Chinese (*hanren*) and Koreans the third class, the Southerners (*nanren*)—the Chinese people of the Southern Song who were conquered by the Mongols last, were in the fourth and lowest class.

⁸⁰ *KRS*, I, Vol. 28. P. 579.

⁸¹ *KRS*, I, Vol.28, P. 580-1.

⁸² *KRS*, I. Vol. 31. P 633.

⁸³ *KRS*, I. Vol. 31. P. 647.

This marriage relationship also provided the opportunity for Korea to be involved in the politics of the Mongol Empire and to exert some influence there. One obvious example was that the Koryŏ Kings were qualified to take part in the *khuriltai* to elect a new Mongol khan, and King Ch'ungyŏl, for instance, participated in the *khuriltai* of 1294, and supported Chengzong to ascend the Mongolian throne. He received many favors from Chengzong as reciprocation, “Because of the great contributions and old age of the King (King Ch'ungyŏl), the Emperor (Chengzong) issued an edict allowing the King to ride a small carriage through the gate of the palace.”⁸⁴ The Koryŏ King was also titled “peaceful Prince” by Chengzong. Later, King Ch'ungsŏn who lived in the Yuan court after he abdicated was again involved in supporting Wuzong's ascent to the throne. Thus, he was entitled the Prince of Shenyang and soon re-ascended the throne of Korea in 1308. Emperor Renzong also appointed King Ch'ungsŏn as the Right Chancellor of the Yuan court in 1313, but he politely declined this offer.⁸⁵

Although husband-wife relationships in the Koryŏ court were not always harmonious, their effects were basically positive in nature. The marriages helped to maintain a stable relationship between these two states, and on the Korean side, ended almost a half-century of warfare and chaos, permitting a return of some prosperity and population growth. On the Mongol side, marriage was a convenient and practical means to control Korea without debilitating warfare. Its effect was probably more peaceful and effective than conquering wars. After the marriage of the Mongol Princess Khudulu(gh) Khaimish to the Koryŏ King, Wang Sim, the Yuan court gradually withdrew its troops from Korea. Later the “Regional Commander for Conquering the East” (*Zheng dong xing zhongshu sheng*) was dismantled. Only when Khudulu (gh) Khaimish died and the Koryŏ King could not control the Korean people did the Yuan court decide to restore the Regional Commander for Conquering the East (led by Kuolijisi) to govern Korea.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ KRS, I, Vol. 31. P. 634.

⁸⁵ See KRS I, vol. 34, p. 693. Jin Weixian (ed.), *Gaoli shi zhong Zhong Han guanxi shiliao huibian*. Taipei: Shi Huo Chubanshe, (1983): 668. MWESJ, *juan* 134, p. 14.

⁸⁶ Wang Yi, *Menggu Yuan yu Wang Shi Gaoli ji Riben de guanxi*. Taiwan: Shangwu Yin Shu Guan, (1973): 116-117.

TABLE 13: Princesses of the Yuan Court Married into the Koryŏ Court

NAME	TITLE	HUSBAND	FATHER
Khudulu(gh)Khaimish (mother of Yuan)	Princess-Supreme of State of Qi 齊國大長公主	Wang Sim (King Ch'ungyŏl)	Khubilai Khan (Shizu)
Botashirin	Princess-Supreme of the State of Ji 薊國大長公主	Wang Wŏn (King Ch'ungsŏn)	Ganmala (Prince of Jin)
Yesujin (mother of To)	Üibi (Good Imperial Concubine)	Wang Wŏn	?
Irinjinbala	Senior Princess of the State of Pu Ji 濮國大長公主	Wang To (King Ch'ungsug)	Esian-Temur /Yexian-Tiemur (Prince of Ying, grandson of Khubilai)
Jintong (mother of Yongsan Wŏnja)	Senior Princess of the State of Cao Ji 曹國大長公主	Wang To	Amuge, Prince of Wei (Shunzong's son)
Bayanhudu	Princess Qing-hua 慶華公主	Wang To	Amuge
Nolun	Princess of-State of ?	Wang Hao, Sim Wang (Prince of Shen)	Songshan (Prince of Liang, Möngke Khan's son)
Irinjinbal (mother of King Ch'ungmog)	Princess De-ning 德寧公主	Wang Chŏng (King Ch'ungghye)	Jiaoba (Prince of Zhen xi wu jing)
Botasirin	Grand and Senior Princess of the State of Lu	Wang Ki (King Kongmin)	Amuge (Prince of Wei)

MARRIAGE LIST 10: *Males of the Koryŏ Royal Family Married to Females of the Mongol Royal Family*

1. Wang Sim.....(1) Khudulugh Kelmish (Hudulujielimish)
2. Wang Wŏn.....(2) Botashirin (Baotashilian) (3) Yesujin (Yesuzhen)
3. Wang To.....(4) Irinjinbala (Yilianzhenbala) (5) Kimdong(Jintong)
(6) Bayan Khudu (Bayanhudu)
4. Wang Hao.....(7) Nolun (Nalun)
5. Wang Chŏng.....(8) Irinjinbal (Yilianzhenban)
6. Wang Ki.....(9) Botasirin (Botasiri/Baotashili)

CHAPTER TWELVE

Conclusion

The Mongol Empire was the largest contiguous land empire in human history. At its peak in the middle of the thirteenth century, its territory extended west to east from Poland to Siberia, and north to south from Moscow to the Arabian Peninsula and Siberia to Vietnam. The Mongol Empire was divided into four khanates, each ruled by a separate khan and supervised by a Great Khan. The Kipchak Khanate, or Golden Horde, ruled Russia; the Ilkhanate ruled Persia and the Middle East, the Chaghatai Khanate ruled over western Asia, and the Great Khanate controlled Mongolia and China.

These areas included a multitude of peoples and states differing greatly in their languages, cultural traditions, and forms of social and economic organization. Consequently, Mongolian royal marriages had an impact on a large number of regions.

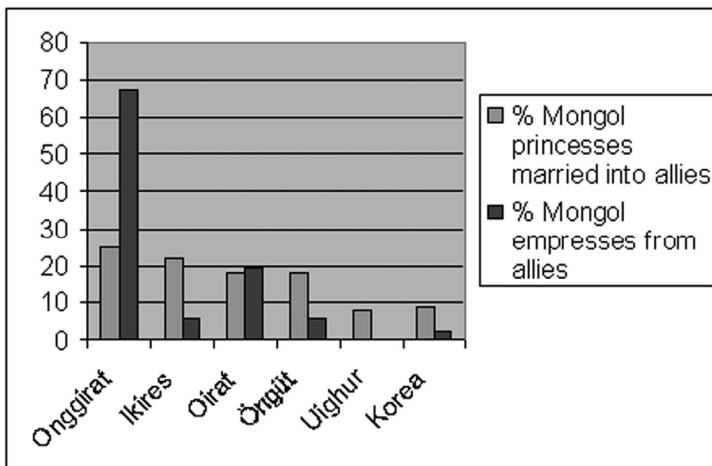
The Tradition of Mongolian Royal Marriage

Both during the World Empire and the Yuan dynasty, marriage unions of the ruling clan were by no means confined to the tribes or clans described in this study, and in practice, were spread over a large number of peoples. Nonetheless, the six tribes and clans we have examined in this study maintained relatively stable marriage relationships with the Mongol ruling house of the great Khanate. The following chart shows the number of Chinggisid Princesses who were married into the allied clans and the number of Mongol Empresses from the allied clans.

The Onggirat tribe was obviously the most important marriage partner of the Chinggisid ruling clan, with 67% of the imperial consorts selected from this tribe and 25% of Mongol Princesses married into this tribe. Among the 22 women who received the title of Empress, either during their lifetime or

TABLE 14: *Number of Chinggisid Princesses Married into Allies and the Number of Mongol Empresses from Allies*

Clan Name	No. of Chinggisid Princesses married into the allied tribes or clans	%	No. of Mongol Empresses Chosen from the allied tribes or clans	%
Onggirat	22	25	42	67
Ikires	19	22	4	6
Oirat	16	18	12	19
Öngüt	16	18	4	6
Uighur	7	8	0	0
Korea	8	9	1	2
TOTAL	88	100	63	100



posthumously, and whose family backgrounds are known (based on the *Yuanshi*), fourteen originated from the Onggirat tribe. They represented 64% of all titled and titular Empresses of the Yuan. Among the rest of the eight Non-Onggirat Empresses, four were from the Ikires tribe, a sub-tribe of the Onggirat tribe according to Rashid Al-din. One came from the Bay'at clan, another from the Tangut, another from the Kiptchac, and another from Korea.

In 1237, Ögödei Khan declared that members of the ruling Chinggisid clan would henceforth take Onggirat women as their senior or principal

wives,¹ some scholars argue that this decree did not necessarily mean that the members of the Mongol ruling clan would thereafter take only Onggirat women as their senior or principal wives. Holmgren thus argues that

given the situation so described, and the fact that at least as many Chinggisid Princesses married into the Ikires leadership as into the Onggirat, imperial marriage strategy during Yuan was scarcely based on the concept of a two-clan preferential system: despite the rhetoric on this subject, there was a deliberate attempt to maximize the spread of marriage ties and to avoid the development of close or exclusive relations with the Onggirat which might work to the disadvantage of the imperial family.²

In view, however, of the extremely high percentage of Yuan Empresses from the Onggirat tribe, as well as the important roles of the Onggirat women in the Yuan court, Holmgren's claims seem to overstate the case.

The selection and designation of Yuan Empresses were restricted not only by the marriage traditions of the Mongol royal clan, but also by the political situation during the particular reign. For instance, at the end of the Yuan, the powerful military minister Yantimur from the Kiptchak tribe dominated the Yuan court in the early days of the reign of Shundi. Thus, Danashili, the daughter of Yantimur, was designated principal Empress. However, when the forces of the Kiptchak tribe were expelled from the Yuan court and Empress Danashili was killed, Shundi was forced to choose his new principal wife from the Onggirat tribe.³

There seemed to be no deliberate attempt to maximize the dissemination of marriage ties during the Yuan period. On the contrary, we see a tendency of gradually narrowing down the extent of marriage partners of the Mongol royal house. For example, among the large number of Chinggis Khan's wives,⁴ only one was known to have originated from the Onggirat tribe. The others were all taken from or presented by the conquered tribes or states, including the Merkit tribe, the Naiman tribe, the Tartar tribe, the Taijiut tribe, the Kereit tribe, Jin, Xi Xia, and Korea. Ögödei had more than sixty wives, but none were known to be from the Onggirat tribe.⁵ Rashid Al-din states that Güyük Khan had many wives and concubines, but only one was recorded, and she was Oghul Ghaimish from the Oirat tribe.⁶

¹ KRS 118:2915.

² Jennifer Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage...", (1986): 127-92.

³ KRS 114:2878-9.

⁴ If we can trust Rashid Al-din, Chinggis Khan had five hundred wives. See *Shiji*, 1b:85.

⁵ *The Successors*, 1:18.

⁶ *The Successor*, 5: 175.

Starting from Möngke Khan, who came to the throne in 1251, practically all Mongol Emperors took Onggirat wives. Among the five Empresses (*huanghou*)⁷ of Möngke recorded in the *Yuanshi*, two were from the Onggirat tribe.⁸ Khubilai had eight Empresses, and three of them were from the Onggirat tribe. One of the three recorded wives of Temür Öljeitü's (Chengzong) was from the Onggirat tribe. Two of the five recorded wives of Qaishan (Wuzong) were from this tribe, and one of the two-recorded wives of Ayurbarvada (Renzong) was from this tribe. Three of the ten Empresses of Shidebala (Taiding) were from the Onggirat tribe. The only recorded wife of Tuq Temür (Wenzong) was an Onggirat woman. One of the three known Empresses of Toqon Temür (Shundi) was an Onggirat woman.⁹

At the same time, Mongol Princesses often married into the Onggirat tribe. Because of incomplete information about the Mongol Princesses who married into this tribe, especially information concerning their fathers, it is impossible to conduct a thorough analysis of this matter. This study has analyzed the two-clan intermarriages between Chinggisid descendants and the nobles of the Onggirat tribe, which, I believe, has shed some light on this issue.¹⁰

Chinggis Khan married Börte Ujin, Dei Sechan's daughter, and his first son, Jochi, married two women of the Onggirat tribe. One of them was Öki-fujin, the daughter of Anchen. As an exchange, Chinggis Khan's daughter Tumanlun was married to Chigu, the son of Anchen, and the grandson of Dei Sechan. This marriage tie, according to Uno Nobuhiro, was a "sister exchange marriage." Jochi married Öki-fujin, the sister of Chigu, and Chigu married Tumanlun, the younger sister of Jochi,¹¹ and Jochi's descendants continued to pursue the marriage ties with the Onggirat tribe. The eldest son of Jochi, Orda, married three Onggirat women. The first son of Orda, Sartaqtai, married Hujan. The second son of Orda, Quli, married Neidiken. The seventh son of Orda, Hülegü, married Qutui.

Chinggis Khan's second son, Chaghatai, established a new marriage tie with the descendants of Daritai, the brother of Dei Sechan. Chaghatai

⁷ In the Yuan dynasty, an Emperor could have many titular Empresses (*huanghou*) in Chinese and *Khatun* in Mongolian), but only one was titled principal Empress (*da huanghou*).

⁸ KRS 106:2693-4.

⁹ KRS 106:2696-2701; 114:2879-82

¹⁰ For the details of these marriage ties, see Chapter 7 and refer to "TABLE 3: The Empresses and Imperial Concubines of Mongol Yuan from the Onggirat tribe", as well as "TABLE 4: The Princesses of the Yuan Court Married into Onggirat Tribe."

¹¹ Uno Nobuhiro, "Hungjilabu yu Chengjisihan xi tonghun guanxi de bianqian." (trans. from *Toyoshi Kenkyu*, vol. 52, No. 3.) *Mengguxue Xinxu*, 67 (1997): 1-7.

married Yesülün and Tögen, the two daughters of Qata. Qata was the son of Daritai and the cousin of Börte Ujin.

Although Ögödei did not marry an Onggirat woman, his third son, the heir-apparent, Kurju, married Qtaqash, the granddaughter of Anchen. As an exchange, Ögödei's daughter, Suorhahan, married Nahe, the grandson of Anchen.

Chinggis Khan's youngest, son, Tolui married Nayan Khatun (father's name unknown¹²), and his son Jurikeh married Bulga, the granddaughter of Anchen. As an exchange, Tolui's daughter Yesubuhua was married to Wochen, the son of Anchen. Tolui's first son, Möngke, married two Onggirat women, Hudutai and Yesuer, both daughters of Manggechen. The fourth son of Tolui, Khubilai, married three Onggirat women. They were Chabui, the daughter of Anchen; Nanbui, the Daughter of Xiantong; and Tiegulun, the daughter of Tuolian. Finally, the youngest son of Tolui, Arigh Böke, married two Onggirat women: Khutlu and Eshitei.

Therefore, one may state that there existed a two-clan preferential system established between the Mongol royal family and Dei Sechan's clan of the Onggirat tribe. Although new marriage ties were occasionally established, these had little impact on the old marriage ties. And, according to Chinggisid marriage strategies, the augmentation of new marriage partners were political choices made either to control foreign states, such as the intermarriages between the Yuan court and the Koryō court, or to win over powerful military ministers, such as the marriage between Shundi and Danashili, the daughter of Yantiemur of the Bay'aut clan.

Holmgren suggests that "there was no urgent reason for a rigid two clan system of marriage exchange. Moreover, with the rationale for its existence removed, such a system could only pose a threat to the supremacy of the ruling family in that the powers invested in the head of state would inevitably fall into the hands of the consort clan. For this reason, practice during Yuan was very different from theory, and the wide-range of marriage ties established during Chinggis Khan's time was maintained with very little modification through to the fourteenth century."¹³

There were only five non-Onggirat Empresses during the Yuan period. They represented 24% of all women who were elevated to the rank of Empress during their lifetime, and 50% of first Empresses of the Yuan ruler. It is true that, in general, there was a danger that clans as powerful as the

¹² It may be inferred that Nayan Khatun was probably from Anchen's family since Tolui and his descendants maintained a close marriage relationship with Anchen's family. Jennifer Holmgren, "Observations...", (1986): 141.

Onggirat could come to dominate the imperial court and to threaten the existence of the dynasty, since “Disasters caused by external clans (*waiqi zhi huo*)” had frequently occurred in Chinese dynastic history, the best-known examples being those of the Lü, Wang, Dou, and Liang in the Han, and Wu and Yang in the Tang.

This was not the case in the Yuan. It is true that some Empress dowagers from the Onggirat tribe became regents, but there were no maternal fathers or uncles from this tribe manipulated imperial political affairs. There were probably several reasons. First of all, every Prince in the Yuan dynasty had his own fief or manor, over which he had complete control. The leaders of the Onggirat tribe and other tribes that maintained a stable marriage relationship with the Yuan possessed their own vast fiefs and had little incentive to aspire to more. During Chinggis Khan’s reign, Anchen and his brothers were granted a huge tract of land in Mongolia, and later, several circuits (Lu) were established in this territory, such as the Yingchang Lu and Quanning Lu which belonged to the “Prince of Lu.” The Onggirat tribe also had many other manors in other areas. For example, the three prefectures in Jining Lu commanded sixteen counties; the six counties in Tingzhou Lu and the seven counties in Yongping Lu. These areas included parts of present-day Shandong, Jiangsu, and Jiangxi. For the Onggirat nobles, these fiefs were like their own kingdoms, and the time and energy in their management to a certain extent, sidetracked their attentions from the throne and political affairs of state.

Another reason, as Holmgren correctly suggests, is that imperial marriage under the Mongols evolved to fit a decentralized feudal mode of administration in which the female offspring played a critical role in preserving the authority and independence of male agnates stationed on the realm’s periphery. Also, because of this decentralized control, the Yuan was one of the few regimes successful in breaking the link between the authority delegated to the senior widow and the status and power of her family. During the Yuan, the position of the imperial wife was never dependent upon that of her family, but rather, she was entrusted with power in the same way as a sister or brother. Her authority did not challenge, and was not challenged by her sister or brother.¹⁴

A third reason is that the Yuan imperial court maintained the democratic military tradition throughout most of the dynastic period. Princes and nobles were entitled to attend *khuriltai* to discuss and determine important state political or military affairs, a practice which surely decreased any attempts by the *waiqi* to control the throne. In addition, the “Four *Keshig* Institution”

¹⁴ J. Holmgren, “Imperial Marriage...,” (1991): 89-90.

of the Yuan whereby the sons of nobles or meritorious generals surrounded the Emperors, the influence of *waiqi* and eunuchs were effectively controlled by the Emperors. The *Mengwur Shiji* offers the following comments regarding this issue:

Amongst the Mongol Emperor's relatives on the side of his wives or mother, the Onggirat tribe was the most illustrious. This tribe had a separate fiefdom, took part in the expeditions or campaigns with its own people, and except for collecting the land rents and tax, was not granted any imperial authority. Therefore, it did not suffer the disaster that the whole people in the tribe were put to death, such as happened [to consort clans] in the Han and Tang dynasties. This strategy was also adopted by the Qing dynasty.¹⁵

In comparing the imperial marriages of the Yuan dynasty with those of the Song dynasty, one finds their marriage policies differed both in form and function. The Song imperial family drew a lesson from the troubles caused by *waiqi* in the Han, Jin, and Tang dynasties, and also adopted various measures to prevent *waiqi* from interfering in political affairs. During the early Song, most of the *waiqi* consisted of renowned generals from the Five Dynasties, and Song imperial clan aimed to consolidate its political power by means of marriage ties with these powerful generals. At the same time, the Song government was concerned about the potential threat they constituted and used marriage as a strategy to weaken their power. Thus when the great generals, including Shi Shouxin agreed to establish marriage relationships with the first Emperor, Taizu, they were, in return, persuaded to give up their military powers. This is a well-known event in Song history called "giving up military power with a cup of wine." To avoid interference of *waiqi* in state affairs, a set of "Methods of treating *waiqi*" was gradually developed.¹⁶ Its strategy towards *waiqi* was to "provide them with a handsome salary and high-ranking titles, but do not let them hold and monopolize power,"¹⁷ and to thi end, formulated a series of stipulations. For example, members of the *waiqi* were not allowed to hold the posts of Chancellor, Commissioner of the Department of Military Affairs (*Shumishi*), Retinue Official (*Shicong Guan*), Censorial Inspector (*Jiansi*), or Prefecture Governor (*Junshou*). A member of the *waiqi* was absolutely prohibited from commanding troops. A man who held a military or political office had to resign if a woman in his family had been selected as Consort of Empress.

¹⁵ MWESJ 23:10.

¹⁶ Li Yujie, Qin Xueqi, *Waiqi yu huangquan*, Xinan Shifan Daxue Chuban She, 1993.

¹⁷ *Guochao zhuchen zouyi*, Vol. 35. Quoted in *Waiqi yu huangquan*.

Though there were no specific regulations regarding the *waiqi* in the Yuan, there is no clear evidence indicating that the *waiqi* ever posed a real threat to the central government. The *waiqi* in the Yuan were regarded and treated as pillars of support for the Mongol Empire, and not only were they not dismissed from military positions, as had occurred in the Song dynasty, but they were often awarded the titles of Princes, were allowed to retain their military power.

This does not, however, imply that all the *waiqi* supported the Yuan court. Because of the frequent internal political struggles for the throne within the ruling clan, the *waiqi* were often forced to make political choices, and they were inevitably divided. For example, when the campaigns between Khubilai Khan and his younger brother Arigh Böke broke out, the Oirat people organized troops to support Arigh Böke. “Arigh Böke’s army was defeated, and many of the Oirat tribesmen were killed.”¹⁸

The political choice of the Oirat nobles was obviously influenced by their close marriage ties with Arigh Böke and his descendants which we have outlined earlier. On the other hand, Khibilai and his descendants had no marriage ties with the Oirat tribe.

Moreover, one of the distinctive policies of the Song imperial marriage was “not considering family status in marriage (*hunyin buwen fayue*).” According to Zhang Bangwei’s statistics, 70.8% of the Empresses and Noble Consorts in the Tang dynasty came from the high-ranking bureaucratic families, while only 26.8% of the Empresses and Noble Consorts in the Song dynasty originated from such families.¹⁹ Among the 41 Empresses and Noble Consorts who have biographies in Song historical materials, 21 were from non-bureaucratic families, and amongst these, many were from low-ranking families. For example, Empress Liu of Zhenzong was a street-performer in Kaifeng, and the mother of Noble Consort Miao of Renzong was a wet nurse of Renzong. The father of Empress Zheng of Huizong was the owner of a wine-shop.

On the contrary, almost all of the Empresses and Noble consorts in the Mongol Yuan came from aristocratic families. Among the 27 Empresses and consorts who had biographies in the *Yuanshi*, 26 were from aristocratic families. They comprise 96% of the total number. Only the Korean woman, Qishi Wanzhehudu, the Empress of Shundi, was from a common family.

¹⁸ *The Successors*, 7:256.

¹⁹ Zhang Bangwei, *Hunyin yu shehui* (Songdai), Ch. 4. Quoted in *Waiqi yu huangquan*, 1989.

Cultural and Political Aspects of the Mongolian Royal Marriage

The marriage institution of the Mongol imperial ruling house stemmed from their exogamic marriage tradition. A man in early Mongolian society was not allowed to marry a woman from within his own tribe. This custom inevitably affected the marriage institution of the Mongol imperial ruling house.²⁰

The practice of exogamy was obviously designed to avoid consanguineous marriage and to prevent inbreeding, but the Mongol royal family seemed not to understand that consanguineous marriage and inbreeding could also take place between two tribes if the two-clan preferential marriage system was continued for several generations. Our study reveals that consanguineous marriage had occurred since the reign of Khubilai Khan and continued until the end of the Yuan dynasty.

The negative impact of consanguineous marriages on the Mongol imperial house became evident beginning with the sons of Khubilai Khan. Many Princes and Princesses were born unhealthy, and as the dynasty progressed, the life spans of the imperial family became shorter. This trend, however, occurred throughout the Mongol Empire from East Asia, to Central Asia and the Middle East. As John Masson Smith observed, "Most Mongol rulers lived short lives. Those in the Middle East died, on average, at about 38, and the successors of Qubilai in the Far East at 33."²¹

Statically, from the time of the *Yeke* Mongol *Ulus* (1206-1279) to the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), the life spans of the members of the Mongol royal family decreased significantly. Of the four Khans of *Yeke* Mongol *Ulus*, Chinggis Khan died when he was 66 years old, Ögödei Khan died at 56 years old, Güyük Khan died at 43, and Möngke Khan died at 52. Among the Emperors of the Yuan dynasty, Khubilai lived the longest, 80 years. Temür (Chengzong) died at 42, Qaishan (Wuzong) died at 31, Ayurbarvada (Renzong) died at 36, Shidebala (Yingzong) died at 21, and Yisün-Temür (Taiding) died at 36. Furthermore, Qoshila (Mingzong) died at 30, Tuq-Temür (Wenzong) died at 29, Irinjibal (Ningzong) died at 7, and Toqon-Temür (Shundi) died at 51. Among these, Güyük, Shidebala, and Qoshila were murdered, but the fact remains, that except for Khubilai, no other ruler lived as long as Chinggis. Many were afflicted with chronic illness throughout their lives, and, we are told, were often unable to fulfill their daily duties. Chengzong, for example, was so ill that he basically entrusted

²⁰ Exogamic marriages have been discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

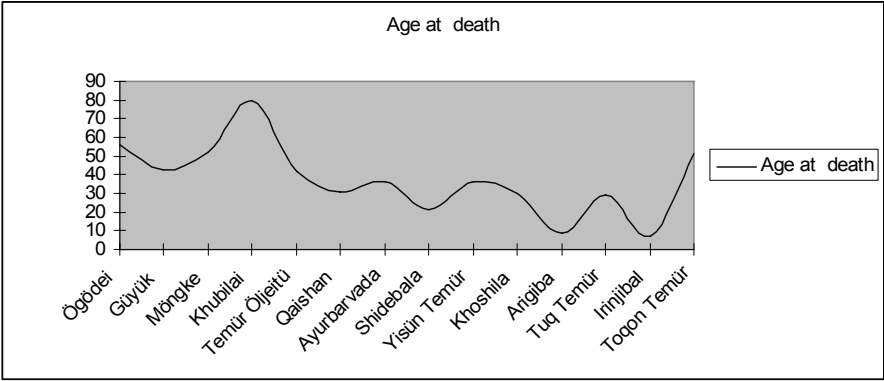
²¹ John Masson Smith, "Dietary Decadence and Dynasty Decline in the Mongol Empire," *Journal of Asian History*, 34(2000)1.

his Empress Bulughan to handle imperial affairs for him.²² Wuzong, Renzong, and Wenzong also suffered from ill-health, and the Yuan government was often controlled by Empress Dowagers, Empresses, or powerful ministers during their reigns.

TABLE 15: *Life Spans of the Mongol Khans and Yuan Emperors*

Khan/Emperor	Age at death	Khan/Emperor	Age at death
Chinggis (Taizu)	66	Shidebala (Yingzong, murdered)	21
Ögödei (Taizong)	56	Yisün Temür (Emperor Taiding)	36
Güyük (Dingzong)	43	Khoshila (murdered)	30
Möngke (Xianzong)	52	Arigiba (Tianshun Di, murdered)	9
Khubilai (Shizu)	80	Tuq Temür (Wenzong)	29
Temür Öljeitü (Chengzong)	42	Irinjibal (Ningzong)	7
Qaishan (Wuzong)	31	Toqon Temür (Shundi)	51
Ayurbarvada (Renzong)	36		

²² Song Lian et al., *Yuanshi*, Zhonghua Shuju, (1976). *juan* 114, p. 2873, see *Houfei zhuan*: “Chengzong was always ill. The Empress mediated among different parties to handle imperial affairs. People all praised that government of the Dade era was smooth and fair, [though] it was handled by this Empress.”

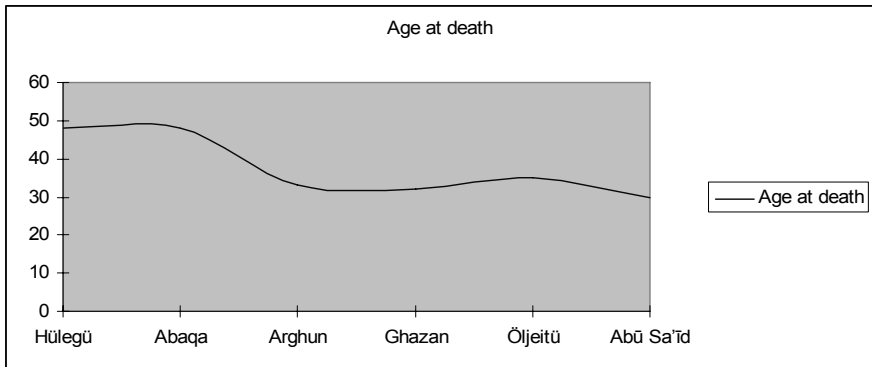


The average lifespan for the four Mongol khans during the World Empire (from Chinggis to Möngke) is 54 years. For the eleven Emperors of the Yuan dynasty, from Khubilai to the last Yuan Emperor Toqon Temür, it is 33.8 years on average.

As a source of comparison, the he following chart shows the life span of the Mongol rulers in the Middle East. (from 1217 to 1335)

TABLE 16: *Life Spans of the Mongol Rulers in the Middle East*

Khan/Emperor	Age at death
Hülegü	48
Abaqa	48
Arghun	33
Ghazan	32
Öljeitü	35
Abū Sa’īd	30



In addition, there seems to have been a widespread problem of high infant mortality and infertility among royal families all over the Mongol Empire. According to the “Table of the Imperial Clan Genealogy” in the *Yuanshi*, many Yuan Princes and Princesses died very young and had no children,²³ and according to Masson Smith, the same problem also occurred in the Middle Eastern Mongol dynasty. Ann Lambton also considers that “the possibility cannot be ruled out that once the Mongols settled in Persia, they ceased to be good breeders.”²⁴

Although one should not conclude that the decline of the Mongol Empire was the direct outcome of consanguineous marriages and inbreeding in the Mongol imperial clan, one must acknowledge that it is at least one of the indirect factors. When we look at the short life spans of the Yuan Emperors after Khubilai Khan, what association of ideas should we have? When we see the morbid and indecisive character the later Yuan Emperors possessed, can we believe that they were really the descendants of the strong and powerful Mongol hunters and conquerors?

Obviously, an immature and inexperienced Emperor, a mindless Emperor, or an Emperor suffering from long-term illness, would hardly perform his duties efficiently. And furthermore, when we have understood that the short life spans of the imperial family members were actually the result of consanguineous marriage and inbreeding, we have to admit that genetic factors were one of the important factors that contributed to the collapse of the Yuan dynasty.

²³ YS 107:2729. Please refer to Chapter 2 for details.

²⁴ A. K. S. Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia* (Albany: State University of New York Press for Bibliotheca Persica of the Persian Heritage Foundation, 1988), P. 296. Quoted in John, Masson Smith, “Dietary Decadence and Dynasty Decline in the Mongol Empire,” *Journal of Asian History*, 34 (2000)1.

Among the Mongol rulers in China, Khubilai was without doubt the most capable, but his descendants became increasingly less competent. His grandson and successor, Emperor Chengzong (1294-1307), was the last able member of the dynasty, and after him, degeneration set in at once. Our study suggest that this degeneration occurred in step with the occurrence of consanguineous marriage and inbreeding within the Chinggisid royal clan.

In exploring the causes of the extinction of the Mongol dynasty from a court-centered point-of-view, we might also take note of a view popular among historians, that the destruction of the Yuan dynasty was the result of over-Sinicization of the Mongols.²⁵ They believe that the descendants of the steppe hunters, succumbed so completely to the pleasures of the sedentary life that they forgot their hardy origins and the causes of their rise to power. In René Grousset's opinion, some Mongol rulers tried unsuccessfully to reverse this trend.

Möngke Khan had been the last to try to bring the conquerors back to the simple ways of the steppe. Khubilai, who succeeded him, decisively reoriented his dynasty toward the Chinese way of life: a sedentary existence among civilized pleasures. Under a man of his personality (or that of his grandson Temür), this was all to the good, for to Mongol hardihood—which in him remained unimpaired—he added Chinese ability. But with the coming of weak, second rate Emperors, that combination proved wholly detrimental. The last Jenghiz-Khanites of China were over-Sinicized, softened by court life and its voluptuous excesses, and cut off from the outer world by a screen of favorites and mistresses, literati and bureaucrats, and so lost virtually every vestige of their Mongol vigor. These descendants of the most redoubtable and terrible conqueror known to history dwindled away into feebleness, ineptitude, tearful vacillation, and in the hour of disaster, lamentation. Of the barbarian character they retained only the inability to accustom themselves to the Chinese idea of the state as an abstract entity. Although occupying the throne of the Sons of Heaven, they remained a clan whose members wrangled in public, snatched power from one another, and destroyed one another. At the time of the Chinese rebellion, they were so hopelessly divided among themselves and so bitterly jealous that, rather than unite in face of danger, they let the Chinese overcome them one by one.²⁶

Grousset has also noticed the short lives of the Mongol Emperors, and he asserts that they resulted from their hedonistic excesses.²⁷ While John

²⁵ See, for example, René Grousset: *The Empire of the Steppes*, trans. by Naomi Walford, Rutgers University Press, (1997): 320-2.

²⁶ René Grousset: *The Empire of the Steppes*, P. 320.

²⁷ *Ibid* : 320-2.

Masson Smith, on the other hand, attributes these problems to dietary decadence.²⁸

Women and wine were certainly prominent in the daily life of Mongol nobles, but they cannot convincingly account for their short lives. Although many Mongol khans and Emperors both loved and over-indulgent in wine and women, not all of them were short-lived. Nor can dietary change after the Mongols conquered their vast territories, fully account for the short life spans, infant mortality, and infertility in the Mongol royal clan. Although the Mongols started to consume more vegetables and grain after they settled in agricultural lands, the main content of their diet was still meat, usually mutton. Moreover, consumption of more vegetables and grain might have improved the health of the Mongols instead of the opposite.

According to the Yuan palace cookbooks *Yin Shan Zheng Yao* (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink), eighty percent of the palace menu consisted of mutton,²⁹ and shockingly, Yuan palace rules stipulated that the daily consumption for an Emperor was five sheep. The last Yuan Emperor, Shundi, changed this rule by reducing his daily consumption to four sheep, and therefore, was praised by Chinese scholars for his virtue of thriftiness.³⁰ It is obvious that no single person could ingest meat in this quantity, but even as a daily household allotment, the quantity is great.

It is said, and probably exaggerated, that Chinggis Khan had five hundred wives, but he lived sixty-six years, while Ögödei was well-known for his excessive drinking, but still enjoyed a life of fifty-six years. The last Yuan Emperor, Shundi, "a weak, vacillating person, found delight only in the company of his favorites and of Tibetan lamas. Dulled by debauchery..."³¹ he still lived for fifty-one years (he might have lived longer if he did not flee to the northern steppes). As we have seen, he was born of Mailaidi, the granddaughter of Arsilan, chief of the Halalu tribe,³² and was thus beyond the traditional consanguineous marriage circle of the Mongol imperial family. If we exclude him and Khubilai, the average life-span of the remaining nine Yuan Emperors was only 27 years.

²⁸ John Masson Smith, op. cit., 35-52.

²⁹ Husihui: *Yin Shan Zheng Yao*, *juan* 1. Zhongguo shudian, (1993). pp. 8-24. Husihui, a sinicized Mongolian, became an imperial dietary physician in the Yuan palace during the Yanyou era (1314-1320) and served several short-lived descendents of Khubilai Khan. See also Paul D. Buell and Eugene N. Anderson: *A Soup for the Qan*, Kegan Paul International, (2000). P. 4.

³⁰ Yang Yu, *Shan Ju Xin Hua*, *juan* 4, Chang tang bao shi, (1785). Zhi bu zu zhai congshu, no. 12. the Emperor himself probably ate only the smallest delicacies from each animal.

³¹ René Grousset: *The Empire of the Steppes*, p. 323.

³² YS 38: 815.

Not only did the Mongol Emperors have short life spans, but also many Mongol Princes and Princesses were short-lived. Our studies show that five out of the eight Mongol Princesses who were married into the Korean court died before thirty, and although the *Koryosa* has recorded in detail the behavior of the Mongol Princesses in the Korean court, but it does not provide any evidence indicating that they indulged in heavy drinking.

With regard to the alcohol consumed in the Yuan palace, grape wine and *qumis* (fermented mare's milk) were the two major types, and neither would be called hard liquor. Masson Smith estimates that the alcohol content of *qumis*, ranged from 3.25% to 1.65%, which is even lower than that of the beer consumed today. The nutritional value of *qumis* was probably more important than its alcoholic content, and in addition, the Mongols had a long history of drinking *qumis*. Peng Daya and Xu Ting of the Southern Song dynasty, who went to Mongolia in 1232 and 1235 respectively, reported in a book entitled *Heida shi lue* that the Mongols drank *qumis*. William of Rubruk who had traveled in Mongolia from 1253 to 1255, also mentioned that some Mongols were indulged in drinking *qumis*.³³ It seems unlikely that alcohol resulted in early death, high infant mortality and infertility.

According to the *Yin Shan Zheng Yao*, the palace menu of the Yuan dynasty greatly emphasized diet therapy, and suggested a limit for many types of food and drink. For example, it holds that the prolonged consumption of pork will block up human blood vessels, make people weak, and make people fat. Therefore it should not be excessively consumed.³⁴

The same book has a long paragraph discussing the issue of alcohol under the title "Things to Avoid and Shun when Drinking Liquor." It raises serious warnings against excessive wine drinking:

Wine tastes bitter, sweet, and extremely hot. It is poisonous. Its main medical values include killing all kinds of viruses, dispelling harmful energy (*qi*), moistening skin and muscle, accelerating blood circulation, improving stomach functions, and allaying worries. It is best to drink little. If one drinks too much, it harms human nerves, shortens life, and changes human nature. Its poison is extreme. Indulgence in excessive drinking is a cause of death.³⁵

Chinese sources do not suggest any of the Yuan Emperors to have been excessive wine drinkers, with the exception of Ögödei Khan whose habit is

³³ William of Rubruk, *The Journey of William of Rubruk to the Eastern Parts, 1253-55* (W. W. Rockhill), Hakluyt Society, London, 1900. *Luburuke dongxing ji*, trans., He Gaoji, Zhonghua Shuju, (1985). pp. 211-215.

³⁴ Husihui, *Yin Shan Zheng Yao*, *juan* 3. Zhongguo shudian, 1993. p. 60. Paul D. Buell and Eugene N. Anderson: *A Soup for the Qan*, Kegan Paul International, (2000). P. 541.

³⁵ *Ibid*, *juan* 1. p.7. Paul D. Buell and Eugene N. Anderson: *A Soup for the Qan*, p. 272.

recorded in both Chinese and Persian sources. Nonetheless, as we have mentioned above, Ögödei lived fifty-six years.

In terms of Sinicization, the Emperors of the Manchu Qing Dynasty were obviously much more Sinicized than their Mongol counterparts in the Yuan, but the Qing lasted more than three times that of the Yuan. Therefore, over-Sinicization, in the sense of a debauched court-life, cannot fully account for the decline of effective rule in the Yuan.

A final consideration as we discuss dynastic decline is the notion that the Mongols were not Sinicized enough. Richard Hooker, for instance, believes that the failure to learn Chinese and integrate themselves fully into Chinese culture greatly undermined the Mongol rulers.³⁶ And it is a not unknown view that the Mongols were the least Sinicized of China's nomadic rulers. This view is popular among Chinese scholars who believe that the Mongols would have been more "civilized" if they had been more Sinicized. They often complain that the Mongol Emperors were so reluctant to learn Chinese culture that they could hardly become good Sons of Heaven. The famed Qing scholar, Zhao Yi, for instance, suggested that most of the Yuan Emperors never learned the Chinese language, and even though some of them became interested in Chinese culture, they had to rely on translation.³⁷

Chinese scholars of later periods seem to have held ambivalent views about the Mongol rule. On the one hand, they were resentful about Mongol rule, because under the Mongols, traditional Chinese culture was faced with extinction and Chinese intellectuals received unjust treatment. On the other hand, however, some of them sincerely accepted the Yuan as a legitimate Chinese dynasty, and believed that the Mongols had received the mandate of Heaven to rule over China. And of course, many Chinese scholars in the Yuan dynasty served the Mongol conquerors loyally. According to Zhao Yi, during the peasant rebellions at the end of the Yuan Dynasty, many Chinese scholar-officials who held *jinshi* degrees and served the Mongols, died to preserve their moral and political integrity.³⁸

The Yuan was the shortest lived of the major Chinese dynasties. From the time that Kublai occupied the Mongol throne in 1264 to the fall of the dynasty in 1368, a mere hundred years passed. Since Khubilai moved his capital to China proper and adopted a Chinese title for his dynasty, he seems

³⁶Richard Hooker, "The Mongol Empire, the Yuan." *World Civilization: An Internet Classroom and Anthology*. June 6, 1999. Washington State University. Jan. 5, 2004.
<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/CHEMPIRE/YUAN.HTM>

³⁷ Zhao Yi, (collated and annotated by Du Weiyun), *Nianer shi zhaji*, Taipei: Dingwen Shuju, (1975): 682-3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 703-4.

to have lost legitimacy among the Mongols still in Mongolia who thought he had become too Chinese. Thus, his successors were placed in an awkward situation. On the one hand, rebellions of Mongol Princes against the Yuan were frequent during the fourteenth century, and on the other, the majority of Chinese, especially in the south, never accepted the Yuan as a legitimate dynasty, regarding the Mongol conquerors rather as bandits, and revolts took place frequently.

Intermarriage not only among the elite, but at all levels of society, had been one of the most effective and natural means for the Chinese to assimilate the “barbarians” in dynastic history. However, this tactic proved futile in the case of the stubborn Mongols. Throughout the Yuan dynasty, the Mongol rulers constantly discouraged Mongols from marrying Chinese, and there were few, if any, Chinese women among the large number of Mongol Emperors’ wives. When the Southern Song was conquered and the Song imperial consorts were sent to Shangdu, the Mongol capital, Khubilai did not accept any of them.

It seems to be a mystery why Khubilai did not take any of the Song imperial consorts as his wives as did his grandfather Chinggis Khan who took women from virtually all conquered tribes and states. Was it a sign indicating a change in attitude of the Mongols towards war captives? Or was he concerned about the consequences of such marriages? To answer these questions, we have to first consider the possible psychological reactions among both the Chinese and the Mongols. If Khubilai took any of the Song consorts, what signal would he send to both the Mongols and Chinese? What would the former Song people feel? Would they deem it an honor or a shame?

Certainly, if Khubilai married a Chinese woman, other Mongols might take it as an example and also marry Chinese. On the other hand, from the Chinese point of view, it would be shameful for an imperial consort to remarry, and it would be a great disgrace to be taken by the enemy. Thus, if Khubilai chose to take the Song consorts, he would probably also take the risk of misleading the Mongols and provoking resentment among the Chinese.

Concerning women’s remarriage, there existed a distinctive difference between the marriage customs of the Han Chinese and the Mongols. Like the Chinese, the Mongols valued married women’s chastity. However, the Mongols encouraged widow-remarriage, especially levirate marriage, which was in sharp contrast to Chinese marriage customs and moral standards, and hence, levirate marriage and its persistence might serve as an indicator of the extent of the Sinicization of the Mongols. Throughout the Yuan dynasty, the

court never banned this marriage custom. On the contrary, during the early Yuan it attempted to spread this custom to other ethnic groups. And there is evidence that some Han Chinese practiced levirate under Mongol influence.

Paul Ratchnevsky has pointed out the fact that, at first, the Mongol conquerors tried unsuccessfully to force their laws upon the subjugated peoples,³⁹ but because nomadic law was wholly concerned with the facts of life on the steppe, it was incapable of meeting the complex requirements of an urban, and rural, chiefly agrarian population.⁴⁰ Therefore, in a second phase, the conquerors introduced a dualistic system of rule. One set of laws governed the conquerors' own people, while the set of laws indigenous to the conquered Chinese was enforced among the latter. The Yuan court thus stipulated that each nationality should follow only its own marriage customs, and the Han people and the Southerners should therefore not practice levirate.⁴¹

The political nature of the Mongol imperial marriages was particularly distinctive for its marriage strategic characteristics, all of them concerned political advantage.

Since the time of Chinggis Khan, marriage had been regarded as perhaps the most important means of all, to create lasting alliances with potential enemies, and he signaled the beginning of this policy by himself acknowledging Ong-Khan as his adoptive father when he was still weak, and then immediately proposed an exchange marriage relationship between the two families to establish a "doubly friendly" relationship.⁴² He proposed that his own son Jochi marry Ong-Khan's granddaughter.⁴³ In the following wars of conquest, Chinggis successfully used this strategy to subdue a number of important tribes and states, in most cases, proposing these marriages himself. For example, when Arslan Khan submitted to the Mongols without a battle, Chinggis decreed, "I shall give [unto him] a daughter,"⁴⁴ and when the Uighur Iduq-qut submitted to him, he said: "I shall also give [unto him] my

³⁹ Paul Ratchnevsky, "Jurisdiction, Penal Code, and Cultural Confrontation under Mongol Yuan Law." In *Asia Major*, Third series, Vol. VI, Part I, (1993): 161.

⁴⁰ *Yuan Dianzhang*, 18-35a, 35b. Also see Paul Ratchnevsky, "The Levirate in the Legislation of the Yuan Dynasty," in *Asiatic Studies in Honour of Dr. Jitsuzo Tamura on the Occasion of His Sixty-fourth Birthday* (Tamura Hakase Soshō Toyoshi Ronso) Tokyo, May 25, MCMLXV. Kyoto, Japan, (1968): 45-62.

⁴¹ *YS* 34, see the basic annals of Wenzong.

⁴² *The Secret History*, Ch. V. p. 89.

⁴³ *YCMS*, annotated by Chen Binhe, Shangwu Yinshu Guan, P. 87. *The Secret History*, Ch. V. p. 89.

⁴⁴ *The Secret History*, Ch. X. p. 171.

daughter. Let him become my fifth son.”⁴⁵ When Khuduqa Beki of the Oirat tribe submitted, Chinggis Khan “favored [him] and gave Checheyigen unto his son, unto Inalchi. He gave Holuiqan, daughter of Jochi, unto Torolchi, elder brother of Inalchi. He gave Alaqa Beki unto Öngüt.”⁴⁶

We have shown that in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, when Chinggis was annexing other tribes in the northern steppes, his marriage relatives, especially the Onggirat and Ikires tribes, had proven to be militarily important.

In this early period, virtually all Mongol Princesses were undertaking important political missions when they were sent to marry the leaders of various dependencies. Before her marriage, each Princess would be first instructed formally about her mission by Chinggis himself or by one of his representatives. The “Princess” was henceforth to be seen not merely as the wife of the leader of the allied state, but instead, her mission was to become the political representative of the Mongol Empire to help control the allied state or tribe. She knew that she must remain loyal to the Mongol royal family instead of the family she was going to enter. She was to keep a clear eye on her task, avoid being influenced by her new environment, and as we have seen, these women often did play important roles in the political affairs of the allied and subordinate tribes and states. This was especially so in the case of the marriages of Alahai Beki to the Ongut state and Khudulugh Khaimish in the Koryō court.

The practice of the marriage strategy by the Mongol ruling house, however, underwent changes throughout the history of the Mongol Empire. When the Chinggisid house had secured its rule over the vast empire, it appeared satisfied with the established marriage ties and was no longer eager to seek new marriage ties with other recently-conquered tribes or states. During Ögödei’s reign (1229-1241), it was further declared that the Onggirat clan should be the chief marriage partner of the Mongol ruling house, thus limiting the sphere of its marriage partners. When the Korean court finally submitted to Yuan rule, Khubilai did not initiate a marriage proposal to the Korean king, but it was the Korean king who repeatedly proposed the marriage tie on his own initiative.

Unfortunately, during the later Yuan period, the established marriage institutions of the Mongol royal family were damaged and the royal marriages became devalued. The extreme case was that of the powerful military minister Yantimur of the Kiptchak clan, who took the Empresses of Emperor Taiding during Wenzong’s reign (1329-32). Moreover, to reward

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Ch. X. p. 172.

Yantimur for his military merits, Wenzong awarded him four more Princesses, and it is astonishing that Yantimur married in total forty Mongol Princesses.⁴⁷ The devaluation of the Mongol royal marriage is indeed a significant sign of the decline of the Mongol empire. Furthermore, Yantimur married his daughter to Shundi and successfully controlled him during his early reign.

As for the political roles of the Mongol Empresses in the Yuan court, Mongolian tradition did not restrict Empresses' political involvement, and therefore, most of the Mongol Empresses were very active in politics throughout the history of the Mongol Empire. They either became regents with direct influence over the government, or they represented in more informal way, the Emperors who were too old or too ill to handle state affairs. At the very least, they habitually influenced the Emperors in policy and decision-making, in particular, playing important roles in the election and enthronement of new Emperors. As we have shown, during the thirteen reigns of the Mongol Khans and the Emperors of the Yuan dynasty, eleven Empresses were actively involved in government affairs.⁴⁸ Some of the Empress dowagers partially, or even fully, controlled the Yuan Emperors for several reigns, as exemplified by the Empress Dowager Daji. Thus, the trend in the Yuan dynasty was an escalation of the influence of the Empresses and the decline of the power of the Emperors.

The *Khuriltai*, the Mongolian-style military democratic institution, was officially terminated after Chengzong's reign (1294-1307). As a consequence, the role of the Empress had become more and more vital to the enthronement of new Emperors. During the late Yuan, three Emperors, Yingzong, Ningzong, and Shundi, were directly enthroned by the Empress Dowagers when they were very young, and it is clear that the majority of Empress Dowagers preferred to designate young and weak Emperors so that they were able to continue their control over government affairs. The struggles among the Emperors, Empresses, Empress Dowagers, as well as Crown Princes, persisted throughout the late period of the Mongol Yuan, inevitably poisoning the political environment and facilitating the leadership, while contributing to the fall of the dynasty.

In the end, the great ambitions of the Chinggisid clan for a maximum geographical expansion of the Mongol empire necessitated marriage strategies for an effective control of the realm. The effect of the political

⁴⁷ KRS 138: 3333. See the biography of Yantimur. A Mongol Princess was not necessarily a daughter of the Emperor. All girls of the royal house could be called and titled "Princess." They were generally called "zongshi nü 宗室女".

⁴⁸ Hu Wu, "Meng Yuan Huanghou yu Yuanchao Zhengzhi," in *Qiusuo*, 3 (1990): 121-125.

marriages of the Mongol royal family was largely justified by its successive domination over the allied tribes and states during the early period of the Mongol empire. The halo once placed on the strategy of Mongol royal marriage faded along with the decline of the Mongol empire.

APPENDIX I

Sources for Mongolian Studies

The Mongol empire of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was the largest contiguous land empire in human history. In its heyday, it stretched from Korea to Hungary, including most of Asia, as well as a large part of Eastern Europe. It lasted for well over a century, and parts of it survived for very much longer. For this reason, the study of the Mongol Empire is relatively difficult. One major problem confronted by historians derives from the linguistic requirements. The sources available to the historian are in Mongolian, Chinese, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Japanese, Korean, Armenian, Georgian, Latin, and other languages. Obviously, it is an unrealistic task for a historian to read all of these languages in the original.

Historians have attempted to provide several solutions to this problem. One of them has been termed by David Morgan as *haute vulgarization*. Here, individual historians do not necessarily make much serious effort to master the target languages, instead, they produce syntheses based on secondary sources, such as those works by specialists on China, Mongolia, the Islamic world, or Europe. The historian of the Mongol Empire is basically required to select his work of Asia, west or east, and to base it on the sources of the two major languages—Persian or Chinese. There is no escape from the necessity of relying on translation.¹

Although it is desirable to have some knowledge of the Mongolian language to study Mongol history, the Mongolian language did not exist in written form before the time of Chinggis Khan. The earliest form of written Mongolian made use of a script borrowed from the Uighur Turks. In addition, the Mongol conquerors were not familiar with the concept of historical recording until they received influences from Sinicized non-Chinese peoples and Chinese.² The only three important Mongolian sources are *Menggu mishi* (*The Secret History of the Mongols*), *Menggu huangjinsh*

¹ David Morgan, *The Mongols*, Blackwell Publishers Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts, (1990): 6.

² Hok-Lam Chan: "Chinese Official Historiography at the Yuan Court: The Composition of the Liao, Chin, and Sung Histories," in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. by John D. Langlois, Princeton University Press, (1981): 58.

(the *Altan Tobci*), and *Menggu yuanliu* (*The Origin and Development of the Mongols*), of which the most important and extensively explored was the *Menggu mishi*, of which several translations are available, including four in English.³ However, no manuscript of the original Mongolian version of the text has yet been located, and the source of the present text is in a Chinese manuscript form. Moreover, there is great controversy with regard to the date of completion of this book. The suggested dates range from 1228 to 1276. The majority of the scholars in Yuan and Mongolian studies since the late Qing dynasty, including Qian Daxin, Tu Ji, Paul Pelliot, Boris Vladimirtsov, and Naka Michiyo believe that it was composed in 1240. However, more careful examination of the historical background and social and political contexts has led some scholars, such as Igo De Rachewiltz and Zhen Jin, along with many Japanese scholars, to believe that it was composed in 1228 (in July of the year of the Rat), at the *Kurletai* election of Ögödei as the Great Mongol Khan, and this book might have been supplemented in later reigns.⁴

The title of the *Secret History of the Mongols* reveals that it was not for public readers, and thus it was never published or translated into Chinese or any other languages in the Yuan dynasty. It records the course of events of almost five hundred years and more than twenty generations, from the mythical origins of the Chinggisid house in legendary times until the latter part of the reign of Chinggis Khan's first successor, Ögödei, who died in 1241. A major part of this book deals with the events which occurred during the life of Chinggis Khan. In the later reigns of the Yuan dynasty. Some Chinese scholars suggested that this book be supplemented with new materials, but their suggestion was declined because of the special nature of this book.⁵

³ Francis Woodman Cleaves (tr.), *The Secret History of the Mongols* (1982), published for the Harvard-Yenching Institute by Harvard University Press. Urgunge Onon (tr.), *The History and the Life of Chinggis Khan (The Secret History of the Mongols)*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1990. Paul Kahn (tr.), *The Secret History of the Mongols: The Origin of Chingis Khan* (1998) which is in poetical language based primarily on the English translation by E. W. Cleaves, published by Cheng & Tsui Company in Boston. I. De Rachewiltz, "The Secret History of the Mongols," *Papers in Far Eastern History* (1971-1978). For a complete record of works on *Yuanchao mishi* in Eastern and Western languages, see Harayama Akira, "Yuanchao mishi youguan wenxian mulu", trans. Yu Dajun, in *Menggushi yanjiu cankao ziliao*, 21 (April, 1982): 1-36.

⁴ See, Igor. De Rachewiltz, "Some remarks on the dating of the Secret History of the Mongols," *Monumenta Serica*, 24 (1965): 185-206. Zhen Jin "Menggu mishi bianzuan shixu pouxi" *Neimenggu shida xuebao*, 4 (1989): 51-61.

⁵ See the biography of Yu Ji in *Yuanshi*, Zhonghua Shuju, *juan* 181: 4179.

The particular nature of this book determines that it might not intend to provide false information, or to hide any facts, or to polish anything, for it recorded both the positive and negative facts in the Mongol history. For example, it recorded the incident in which Chinggis murdered one of his half-brothers; it also recorded the fact that Chinggis' wife, Borte, was captured by the Merkit people and married to one of the tribesmen. Although she was rescued later by Chinggis, she gave birth to a son called Jochi, and it was highly probable that he had Merkit blood.

There are three Chinese versions of this book, all in Uighur Mongolian script, using the phonetic value of the characters irrespective of their meaning to represent the Mongolian sounds. Because it is the only substantial surviving Mongol work about the foundation of the Mongol Empire, it is of great importance. Most historians have used it as their main source for the study of the life and career of Chinggis Khan as well as Mongolian history in general, and it is also the chief primary source for this study.⁶

One of the major differences between European and Chinese historiography in the past, as pointed out by many historians, was the predominance of official historiography in China. The standard dynastic histories focus on the institutional and administrative aspects of persons and events to such a degree that they report what was known only to the metropolitan bureaucracies. The picture of the past as given by these sources is, as pointed out by Herbert Franke, only one-sided.⁷

The major Chinese source is the official dynastic history, the *Yuanshi* compiled by Song Lian (1310-81) et al., between 1369-70. It is complete in two hundred and ten *juan*, which covers the year 1206-1369. Chinese administrative practice required that year-by-year records should be reserved relating to everything of the government. By compiling the official history of the fallen rulers they would symbolically formally declare that the new dynasty had decisively replaced the old one.

The *Yuanshi* was compiled hastily by the Ming government of China after the end of the Yuan dynasty in 1368 in less than one year; this was faster than any other Standard History. It is incomplete and inaccurate in many aspects, especially the "*Liezhuan*" or "biography" section. In addition,

⁶ In this study we use the Chinese version of *Yuanchao Mishi* annotated by Daorun Tibu and published by Shenghuo Dushu Xinzhi Sanlian Shudian in 1980; we use the English version *The Secret History of the Mongols* translated by Francis Woodman Cleaves and Published for the Harvard-Yenching Institute by Harvard University Press in 1982.

⁷ Herbert Franke, "Some Aspects of Chinese Private Historiography in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries", *Historians of China and Japan*, ed. W. G. Beasley, E. G. Pulleyblank, London, Oxford University Press, (1961): 115.

many careless mistakes have been found. Therefore, since its completion, the *Yuanshi* has been criticized severely, and it has been deemed to be the least satisfactory of all the official dynastic histories of China. However, no matter how unsatisfactory it may appear, the *Yuanshi* preserves valuable source materials. In the words of Endymion Wilkinson, “the fact that it is unpolished is a blessing in disguise in that many documents are preserved in their original or near-original state.”⁸ Yet, by using only the *Yuanshi* we can only gain a semi-complete picture of the Mongol Empire. Like other Chinese sources of the period, it shows almost no interest in any part of the world other than China itself and its immediate neighbors, such as Korea, Japan, and Burma. There are no sections on the other Mongol khanates. Therefore, Chinese sources, though certainly the basis for the study of the most important part of the Mongol Empire, are of limited use for the history of the empire as a whole.⁹

The shortcomings of the official history may sometimes be remedied by the so-called “*yeshi*” (unofficial histories). Among them, we find the *biji* or “notebooks” a unique genre in Chinese historiography. These provide important information ignored or omitted by official histories. Lin Yutang gave an excellent characterization of the *biji*:

Memoirs or notebooks are the laziest form of literature, requiring no organization of material, and therefore the most popular literary occupation of Chinese scholars. Such notebooks vary from serious and sometimes highly important records of historical events and documents, written to supplement official histories, to the most disorderly jumble of tales of ghosts, fox spirits, and reincarnations, all these sometimes co-existing in the same volume. In general, the notebooks come well under the general classification of ‘scholarly gossip’. The purpose of the authors was in most cases the desire to supply materials for learned and witty conversations, an aim which was often expressed in the prefaces to such works. But often the authors hoped to supplement the official histories by writing down their own experiences and information. Another purpose was to illustrate traditional ethics by giving examples of behavior both laudable and blamable. Finally there was a motive which usually accompanied the other motives, namely, entertainment. It is clear that their details on cultural history have particularly high value. It is equally clear that,

⁸ Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History, A Manual*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series, 46. Harvard University Press, (1998): 836.

⁹ Herbert Franke, “Some Aspects of Chinese Private Historiography in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries”, *Historians of China and Japan*, ed. W. G. Beasley, E. G. Pulleyblank, London, Oxford University Press, (1961): 115.

written by and for scholars, they also reflect the ideology of the literati class with all their traditional concepts.¹⁰

Because of the colorful and disordered nature of *biji*, it is often necessary for historians to be discriminatory and to reorganize the contents of the subject matter. Of the twenty-nine extant *biji* from the Yuan dynasty, the most extensively quoted from include *Chuo geng lu* and *Yuanshi yeting ji* by Tao Zongyi, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji* by Li Zhichang, and *Gengshen waishi* by Quan Heng. *Chuo geng lu* faithfully recorded various matters in Yuan society, from the imperial palace to the common people, including palace court activities, and its secrets, social events, and customs. *Yuan Shi Yeting Ji*, on the other hand, focuses on the Yuan palace and records such details as the buildings, foods and drinks, clothing, imperial titles, and celebrations. Both are indispensable for this study.

Persia, according to John Andrew Boyle, did not have a tradition of official historiography as China did, but during the Mongol rule it did produce its own variety of “official” history. The most important works of the chronicles dealing with the years after Chinggis Khan’s invasion were written by Juvaini, Rashid al-Din, and Wassaf. All of them were high-ranking government servants. Juvaini was appointed by Hülegü as the governor of all the territories that had been directly held by the Caliphs, i.e. Baghdad itself, Arab Iraq or Lower Mesopotamia and Khuzestan in 1259. He continued to administer this great province for more than twenty years.¹¹

The most authoritative of non-Chinese sources was Rashid al-Din who for twenty years was the chief minister of the Il-khanate, the Mongol kingdom in Persia and Iraq. Therefore, it is unquestionable that all three historians had access to good sources of information, and that they understood their sources and writings. But the problem is, as pointed out by David Morgan, that most of these histories, even if they were not in all cases precisely official production, they were written for royal patrons and reflect to a greater or lesser extent the points of view and the preconceptions of the rulers and the official classes.¹²

¹⁰ *The Gay Genius* (London, 1948): 352. Quoted in Herbert Franke, “Some Aspects of Chinese Private Historiography in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries,” *Historians of China and Japan*, ed. W. G. Beasley, E. G. Pulleyblank, London, Oxford University Press, (1961): 116.

¹¹ John Andrew Boyle, Translator’s Introduction to *The History of the World Conqueror*, Alad-Din ‘Ata-Malik Juvaini, Manchester University Press, p.xxii, 1958.

¹² David Morgan, *The Mongols*, Blackwell Publishers Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts, (1990): 8.

Ala-ad-Din ‘Ata-Malik Juvaini’s book, *Ta’rikh-I-Jahan-Gusba* called, was translated by John Andrew Boyle as “*The History of the World Conqueror*,” for Juvaini tried to make it as comprehensive as he could. Juvaini traveled twice to Mongolia, where he gathered large quantities of information. To quote Steven Runciman’s comments to the *Forward* of Boyle’s translation,

Of the writers who have left contemporary accounts of the Mongols none is more important than Juvaini. He knew personally many of the chief actors in the dramatic stories that he told. He enjoyed the confidence of the Il-Khan Hülegü, the Mongol conqueror of Baghdad. He himself was intimately connected with one of the most interesting episodes in the story, the destruction of the headquarters of the Assassins at Alamut.¹³

Juvaini’s history is an encyclopedia of the early Mongol period, written in a flowery literary Persian style.

Yet Juvaini’s work has for a long time been overshadowed by the later Rashid-al-Din’s *Jami’ al-tawarikh*, “Collection of Histories,” which deserves the title of a world history, “a vast historical encyclopedia, such as no single people, either in Asia or in Europe, possessed in the Middle Ages.”¹⁴ Rashid-al-Din had an advantage, in the sense that he was able to draw upon Mongol sources inaccessible to Juvaini, and thus, his account of the early life of Chinggis Khan is infinitely more complex and more detailed than Juvaini’s work. As a trained physician, he entered Mongol service at the end of the thirteenth century. This was at the time when the Mongols in Persia had at last accepted the religion of the majority of their subjects. The Ilkhan Ghazan had declared his conversion to Islam after his accession in 1295, and the Mongols under his rule had followed his example. With the Mongols’ conversion to Islam and the gradual growth of identification between them and their subjects, it was now the Mongol, rather than the Muslim identity, that was in danger. David Morgan assumes that, probably with this in mind, Ghazan asked Rashid al-Din to write a history of the Mongols in Persia, possibly as some kind of a permanent *aide-memoire*.¹⁵

The second volume of this important work was translated by John Andrew Boyle as *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, and was published by the Columbia University Press in 1971. A complete Chinese translation entitled *Shiji* by Yu Dajun and Zhou Jianqi was published in 1986. However, a

¹³ ‘Ala-ad-Din ‘Ata-Malik Juvaini, *The History of the World Conqueror*, (tr.) John Andrew Boyle, Manchester University Press, (1958).

¹⁴ See the English introduction to Vol. I of Qazvini’s text, 1xiii-1xiv.

¹⁵ David Morgan, *The Mongols*, Cambridge, Blackwell Publishers Inc., (1990): 18-19.

complete English translation of this important work was not available until 1999, when it was translated by W. M. Thackston and published by Harvard University, entitled *Compendium of Chronicles, A History of the Mongols*.

The most important European sources are those provided by travelers, among whom the most acute observers were two well-known Franciscan friars, John of Plano Carpini (1185-1252) and William Rubruck (?1215/1220-?1270). Carpini was sent to Mongolia by Pope Innocent IV in April of 1245, after the Mongols invaded Europe and when the Europeans were in the fear of another attack from the Mongols. Carpini spent two and half years traveling as papal ambassador through Eastern Europe and to southern Russia to the camp of the Great Khan, not far from the Mongol capital, Qaraqorum in Mongolia. In November of 1247 he returned to France. Soon he completed his report to the Pope later entitled *Libellus Historicus*. Carpini's book, *L' Ystoria Mongalorum*, describes the history and customs of Mongols he had observed on his journey. But the major part of his report discusses in detail how the Mongols organized themselves for war, and how the European powers ought to prepare themselves for resistance.

More detailed information about the Mongols was provided by William of Rubruck, who was sent by Louis IX of France at the end of 1352. Following the orders of Louis, Rubruck insisted that he was only a missionary instead of an official ambassador, and therefore he traveled more freely, and eventually arrived at Qaraqorum, the capital of the Mongol Empire. He stayed there for six months, and had meetings with the then Great Khan, Möngke. Rubruck's *Itinerarium* records his close observations on the military and political organizations of the Mongol Empire, the social position of Mongolian women, the capital of the Mongol Empire, as well as the customs of the Mongols. In sum, his book offers a much more straightforward travel narrative than Carpini's book.

Twenty years later, when Marco Polo traveled to China, the Mongol Empire had, to a degree, broken up into separate khanates. Marco Polo spent twenty years in Asia, most of it in the service of the Mongols in China. According to himself, he soon became a high-ranking official in Khubilai Khan's court and participated in many important policy-making processes, including Mongols' invasions of Japan in 1281, and of South-east Asia in 1283, 1285 and 1287. His book, the *Travels of Marco Polo*, is by far the best known, and the most valuable due to its information about China. It provides useful information about the administrative organizations of the Mongol Empire, its central and local governments, palace institutions, tax system, Chinese cities, provinces, Mongol troops, as well as transportation system of

the Yuan dynasty. His book greatly aroused Europeans' enthusiasm for the East. During the 14th and 15th centuries, his book was the most important reference book for drawing Asian maps; it directly enlightened Europeans on how to adopt printing and gunpowder production techniques. And most importantly, it played an important role in the geographical discoveries of the 15th and 16th centuries.¹⁶

¹⁶ Ma. Yi-Ge'erman, *Xifang de Menggushi Yanjiu* (Mongolian Studies in the West), trans. by Chen Hongfa, Neimenggu Jiaoyu Chubanshe, (1992): 32.

APPENDIX II

Biographies of Empresses and Imperial Concubines (*Hou Fei Zhuan*)

Yuanshi Volume 114

The *Guang xian yi sheng* Empress (Empress who honored and assisted the Holy Emperor) of Taizu¹, [Bortai] Xuzhen was the daughter of Dei Sechen from the Onggirat tribe. Dei Sechen and his son Anchen followed Taizu on punitive expeditions and performed meritorious service. [Anchen] was granted the name “national uncle” (*Guojiu*), and was granted the title of Prince, to command his tribe. There was an imperial decree which reads: “A girl born [to this tribe] will be the Empress [of the Mongols]; a boy born [to this tribe] will marry a Mongol Princess. This will continue from generation to generation.” In the twelfth month of the second year of the Zhiyuan era (1265) in Shizu’s reign she was posthumously conferred the title of *Guang xian yi sheng* Empress.² The document of conferment reads: “To respect the ancestors, and to promote honesty and filial piety, are without doubt, the most important duties of a king’s government. [A king should] model himself after heaven and earth, and establish great fame so that his mother could be glorified. Therefore one must be reverent in the ancestor’s temple, and reveal [the achievements of the ancestor] to the following generations. To do this is extremely proper, and to do this will be of great benefit. The *Guangxian* Empress had a deeply placid heart and had a gentle and beautiful moral character. When the worthy forefather undertook his pioneering work, she helped day and night by seeking out men of worth and ability. She made great contributions to the state, ...now I send a Grand Commandant, with a jade conferment book and a jade treasure, to confer the respectful title of *Guang xian yi sheng* Empress upon her...”³ She was added to the temple of

¹ Taizu, temple name of Chinggis Khan.

² In the “*Houfei Biao*” in the *Yuanshi*, under the name of Bortie Xuzhen, it reads, “She was posthumously conferred the title of ‘*Guangxian*’ in the second year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1265), and received an additional title of ‘*Guang xian yi sheng* Empress’ in the second year of the *Zhida* era (1309). See *Yuanshi* 106:2693-4.

³ This conferment document was actually issued in the second year of the *Zhida* era (1309). The compilers of the *Yuanshi* mistakenly dated it to the second year of the *Zhiyuan* era.

Taizu and was offered sacrifices in the temple of Taizu. There were more than forty other Empresses and imperial concubines from the four *ordo* [of Taizu]. Their clan names were not recorded, their names are all in the Table [of the Empresses and Imperial Concubines]. The following will follow this example.

The *Zhaoci* (illustrious and kind) Empress of Taizong,⁴ named Tuoliegena, was from the Naimazhen (Naiman) clan. She gave birth to Dingzong. In the twelfth month of the year of *Xinchou* (1241), when Taizong died, this Empress acted as regent for five years. In the year of *Bingwu*, she summoned all the Princes and officials to discuss the enthronement of Dingzong. Most governmental affairs were still decided by the Empress. She died in the second year of *Zhiyuan* (1265),⁵ and was posthumously conferred the title of *Zhao Ci* Empress. She is worshiped in the temple of Taizong.

The *Qinshu* (admirable and virtuous) Empress of Dingzong,⁶ was named Wowulihaimishi. When when Dingzong died, she held court from behind a screen while holding her son Shiliemen for six months. In the second year of the *Zhiyuan* era she was posthumously conferred the title of *Qin Shu* Empress.

***Zhenjie* (chaste) Empress of Xianzong,**⁷ *Hudutai*, was from the Onggirat clan, and was the daughter of Manggechen who was the grandson of Dei Sechen. She died early, and her younger sister, Yehsur, succeed her as Imperial Concubine. In the second year of the *Zhiyuan* era she was posthumously conferred the title of *Zhen Jie* Empress.

In addition, according to the Records of Sacrifices in the *Yuanshi*, “The ancestral temple was completed in the third year of the *Zhiyuan* era. The Director of Political Affairs, Zhao Bi, was ordered to work together with others to discuss and decide the respectful titles and temple names. Eight worship rooms were determined.” See YS 74:1832. Therefore all the posthumous names were conferred in the third year of *Zhiyuan* instead of the second year of *Zhiyuan*.

⁴ Taizong is the temple name of Ögödei Khan.

⁵ This record is incorrect. First, “the second year of *Zhiyuan*” should be “the third year of *Zhiyuan*,” second, according to Juvaini, Toregene died two or three months after Güyük ascended the throne. See *World Conqueror*, vol. 1, p. 244.

⁶ Dingzong is the temple name of Güyük Khan.

⁷ Xianzong is the temple name of Möngke Khan.



11. Chabui (?-1277), Empress of Khubilai Khan

The *Zhao rui shun sheng* (illustrious, wise, obedient, and holy) Empress of Shizu,⁸ Chabi, was the daughter of Anchen from the Onggirat clan. Anchen was Prince of Zhongwu of Jining. She gave birth to Yuzong. In the early years of the *Zhongtong* era (1260-64) she was conferred the title of Empress. In the third month of the tenth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1273), she was presented with the conferment certificate and received the respectful name “*Empress of Zhen yi zhang sheng shun tian rui wen guang ying*.”

One day, four *chieshieq* officers presented a memorial to the Emperor to enclose and occupy a piece of land just outside the capital to herd horses. Since the Emperor having just given permission, [the four *chieshieq* officers] were about to present a map of the land to be occupied. The Empress went before the Emperor, admonishing against this. She first reproved the Grand Guardian (*Taibao*) Liu Bingzhong: “You are a wise man among the Han people, and the Emperor listens to your words, why do you not admonish the Emperor? If the capital were just being established, it would be all right to use the land to herd horses, but now that the lands have already been divided

⁸ Shizu is the temple name of Khubilai Khan.

among the army and commoners, how can you take them by force?" The Emperor became silent, and ordered this action not to be done.

The Empress once drew one silk facing and one silk underside for a quilt from the palace administrative bureau. The Emperor said to the Empress: "These are things needed by the army and the state. They are not personal belongings. How can you take them?" From then on, the Empress started to lead the palace women to do needlework, using the old bowstrings to make threads, and then making cloth. It was even thicker and more solid than silk and satin. Taking the abandoned skins of the front legs of sheep in the *Xuan Hui Yuan*,⁹ the Empress sewed them into carpets. These examples show that she was very thrifty and did not like things to be wasted.

In the thirteenth year (1276), when the Song had been conquered, and the young Song Emperor made obeisance to Khubilai in Shangdu, a huge banquet was held, and all the people were very happy. Only the Empress was unhappy. The Emperor asked: "Now that I have conquered south of the Yangzi River, I will not need to use any military forces any more. All the people are happy, but only you seem unhappy. Why?" The Empress knelt down and replied: "I have heard that since ancient times there have been no states that have lasted for a thousand years. I will feel lucky if I do not let my descendants fall into such a situation." The Emperor displayed the antique treasures from the Song palace storehouse, and asked the Empress to have a look. The Empress took only a casual look from one side and then left. The Emperor sent a eunuch to ask the Empress which things she would like to take for herself. The Empress replied: "The Song people saved these things for their descendants, but their descendants were unable to preserve them, and gave them to us. How can I be so hardhearted as to take any of them?" At that time the Empress Dowager of the Song, Quanshi, arrived at the capital. Since she was not accustomed to the northern climate, the Empress asked the Emperor to send her back to the south of the Yangzi River. The Emperor did not accede to this. After she had presented a memorial to the Emperor three times, he answered, "You women do not have foresight. If we send her back to the south, in case there is a rumor [of rebellion] arising, we have to destroy her whole clan immediately. That is not the way of taking pity on her. If we want to show our compassion, we can give her a regular pension, and let her live in peace." The Empress then left. Afterwards, she treated the Song Empress Dowager more generously.

The old style Mongolian hat did not have a brim. The sunlight always dazzled the Emperor when he shot arrows. When the Emperor told the Empress about this, she immediately added a front brim to his hat. The

⁹ A bureau responsible for the affairs of the Empresses.

Emperor was extremely happy, and ordered that it should be a formal fashion. The Empress also designed a type of dress in which the front part was made of one piece of cloth while the back part was twice as long than the front part without collar or sleeves, but there were two loop straps. It was called “*bijia*”, and was convenient to wear while riding horses and shooting arrows. People all followed this fashion. The Empress was intelligent, and was calm and resourceful in crucial junctures and emergencies. At the beginning of the establishment of the dynasty, she had been very helpful and contributed greatly to correcting the wrong policies of the government.

She died in the second month of the fourteenth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1277).¹⁰ In the thirty-first year (1294), Chengzong succeeded to the throne, and in the fifth month of the same year, she was posthumously conferred the title of “*Zhao rui shun sheng* Empress.” The conferment book reads: “...this former Empress’s great virtue could sustain things. Her righteous position could support the heavens. She displayed great leadership in the inner court and promoted the great ethics under heaven. Previously she served the Emperor when he was still a Prince, and they passed through troubled times together. She saw clearly the potential danger and urged Shizu to return his troops from the river of Hubei, and she provided wise advice to help Shizu ascend the throne in Shangdu, as she had great prophetic vision and was able to make quick decisions based on her own judgment. She also set her mind on recommending persons of virtue to help the Emperor. She helped my holy ancestor establish the extreme honor of an Emperor. She brought up my late father to undertake the heavy duties of the country...” She was offered sacrifices in the temple of Shizu.

Empress Nanbi was the daughter of Xiantong from the Onggirat clan. Xiantong was the grandson of Nachen. She became Empress in the twentieth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1283) and lived in the Principal Empress’s palace (*zheng gong*). At that time Shizu was old, and therefore this Empress gradually became involved in politics. The chancellors and ministers were unable to see the Emperor frequently, and they had to report issues through the Empress. She gave birth to a son whose name was Tiemiechi.

¹⁰ According to the basic annals of Shizu and the Table of Empresses and Imperial Concubines in the *Yuanshi*, Chabi died in the second month of the eighteenth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1281), which I believe is correct. See YS 11:230; 106:2698.



12. Shiliandali, Empress of Temür Öljeitü (Chengzong)

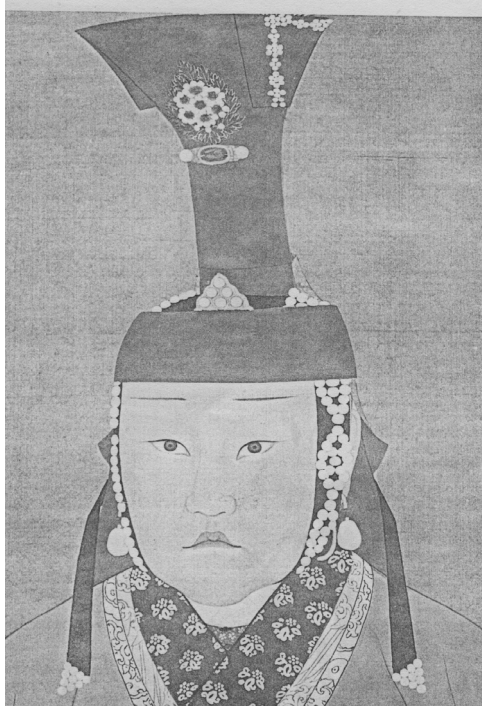
The *Zhen ci jing yi* (chaste, kind, quiet, and good) Empress of Chengzong¹¹, **Shiliandali**, was the daughter of Woluochen from the Onggirat clan. In the tenth month of the third year of the Dade era (1297), she was designated as Empress.¹² She gave birth to a son named Deshou who died very young. In the tenth month of the third year of the *Zhida* era (1310)

¹¹ Chengzong is the temple name of Temür Öljeitü.

¹² The record of this woman in the Table of Empresses and Imperial Concubines in the *Yuanshi* is different, which reads, “The Imperial Concubine Shiliandali was from the Onggirat clan. She died early. In the first year of the *Zhida* era (1308) she was posthumously conferred the title of *Zheng Ci Jing Yi* Empress, and was added to the temple of Chengzong.” She died before Chengzong ascended the throne, so that she was called *yuanfei* (Principal Imperial Concubine) in the *Houfei Biao*. She was not conferred the title posthumously in Chengzong’s reign. The biography is erroneous to say that she was designated as the Empress in the third year of Dade. According to the basic annals of Chengzong, the Empress that was designated in the third year of Dade was Empress Buluhan from the Boyawu clan, not from the Onggirat clan. See *Yuanshi* 20:429; 106:2697-8.

in Wuzong's reign, she was conferred posthumously the title of *Zhen Ci Jing Yi* Empress. The conferment book reads, "...The respectful former principal Imperial Concubine from the Onggirat clan gave birth to a Prince. Her virtue has been shown in the red palace history (*tongshi*)..."

Empress Buluhan was the daughter of the Imperial Son-in-law Tuolisi of the Boyuewu clan. In the early years of the *Yuanzhen* era (1295-97), she was designated as the Empress. In the third year of the Dade era (1299) she was presented with the conferment book and treasure. Because Chengzong had always been ill, this Empress undertook some duties of government. She trusted the chancellor Halahasun, and the government in the Dade era was deemed to be stable and fair, with all matters handled and decided by this Empress. In the capital, a Temple called Wanningsi was built where a secret Buddha figure was molded which looked ugly and strange. The Empress covered its face with a handkerchief, and soon afterwards ordered it destroyed. The ministers presented a memorial to the Emperor to confer a respectful title [to the Empress], but the Emperor did not permit this. When the Emperor visited Shangdu, the Empress personally asked the Emperor to do this, but the Emperor said: "I have been sick for a long time, and many major affairs of state have had to be put aside. How can I take care of a thing like this?" This then was not done. In the tenth year of the Dade era (1306), the Empress planned to demote and exile the Imperial Concubine of Shunzong, Daji, and her son Renzong, to Huaizhou. But in the next year Chengzong died. At that time Wuzong was still on the northern frontier. [The Empress] was afraid that when he returned, he would retaliate because of her former enmity. So she ordered Anantashihli, the Prince of Anxi, to be brought to the capital, and planned to put him on the throne. Renzong entered the capital from Huaizhou and carried out a purge in the palace. He killed Prince Anxi, and charged the Empress as co-conspirator of Prince Anxi. She was exiled to Dong'an Zhou.



12. Zhengge (?-1327), Empress of Khaishan (Wuzong)¹³

9. The *Xuan ci hui sheng* (kind, virtuous and holy) Empress of Wuzong,¹⁴ Zhengge, was the daughter of Bengbula from the Onggirat clan. Bengbula was the son of Tuolian. In the fourth month of the third year of the *Zhida* era (1310) she was conferred the title of Empress. In the second year of the *Huangqing* era (1313) the Changqiu Temple was established to manage the affairs of the Empress' palace, which was ranked officially as the

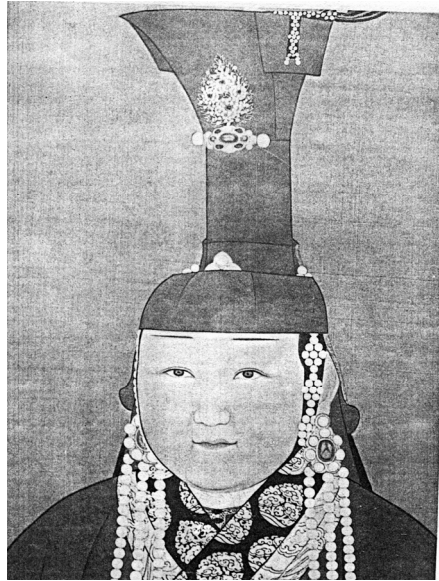
¹³ The identification of this woman has been controversial. According to Hakan Chulun, this painting was tagged "Zhengge" in the collection of the Palace Museum in Taiwan. But in an album of paintings published in Inner Mongolia, this woman is believed to be Nanbui, the Empress of Khubilai Khan. (See Hakan Chulun, *Menggu Kehan yu Kedun*, (The Mongolian Kings and Queens), Taipei, Zhonghua Minguo Menggu Wenhua Xiehui, 1992:1) Another album of paintings published in the year of Jiazi (1924) confirms that this woman was Zhengge (see Temugetu (ed.) *Yuanchao Lidai Di Hou Xiang*, Beiping Mengwen Shushe Jiazi Nian).

¹⁴ Wuzong is the temple name of Khaishan.

third rank (*san pin*). She died in the eleventh month of the fourth year of the *Taiding* era (1327). She was conferred the respectful title of *Xuan Ci Hui Sheng* Empress, and was buried together with Wuzong.



13. Empress of Khaishan (Wuzong),
name unknown



14. Empress of Khaishan (Wuzong),
mother of Wenzong, name unknown

Empress Sugeshili was the daughter of Anchen Harzhi ¹⁵ and the cousin of Empress Zhengge.

[Wuzong] had two Imperial Concubines: one was Yiqilieshi from the Ikires tribe, who was the daughter of Princess Nuwulun, and she actually gave birth to Mingzong. In the second year of the *Tianli* era (1329), she was posthumously conferred the title of *Ren Xian Zhang Sheng* (kind, illustrious, and holy) Empress; the other was Tangwushi from the Tangwu clan, who gave birth to Wenzong, and was posthumously conferred the title of *Wen Xian Zhao Sheng* (refined, illustrious, and holy) Empress in the second year of the *Tianli* era (1329).

¹⁵ Anchen Harzhi is not the name of one person. Instead Anchen is one person, and Harzhi is another person. Some words were missing following Anchen. According to the biography of Dei Sechan in the *Yuanshi*, Sugeshili was “the daughter of Harzhi who was the great grandson of Anchen.” See YS 118:2919.



15. Anashisheli (?-1322), Empress of Ayurbarvada (Renzong)

The *Zhuang yi ci sheng* (sedate, beautiful, kind, and holy) Empress of Renzong,¹⁶ **Anashihshihli**, was from the Onggirat clan, who gave birth to Yingzong. In the third year of the *Huangqing* era (1314) she was conferred the title of Empress, with a conferment book and a seal. Officers were sent to report and offer sacrifices to Heaven in the southern suburbs and the ancestral temple, and the Diannei Yuan was then changed to Zhongzheng Yuan, which was ranked as the second highest (*zheng er pin*).

When Yingzong ascended the throne, she was conferred a respectful title of Empress Dowager. And she received the congratulations of all the officials in the Xingsheng Palace.

She died in the second year of the *Zhizhi* era (1322). Then she was conferred the posthumous title of *Zhuang yi ci sheng* Empress.She was buried together with Renzong.

¹⁶ Renzong is the temple name of Ayurbarvada.



16. Sugebala (?-1327), Empress of Shidebala
(Yingzong)



17. Empress of Shidebala (Yingzong)
name unknown.

The *Zhuang jing yi sheng* (sedate, quiet, beautiful, and holy) Empress of Yingzong, Sugebala, was from the Ikires tribe, and was the daughter of Princess of the State of Chang, Yilihaiya. She was conferred the title of Empress in the first year of the *Zhizhi* era (1321). She died in the sixth month of the fourth year of the *Taiding* era (1327). She was posthumously conferred the title of *Zhuang jing yi sheng* Empress.



18. Babuhan, Empress of Yisün Temür (Taidingdi)

The Empress of Emperor Taiding, Babuhan, ¹⁷ was the daughter of Woliuchar from the Onggirat clan. Woliuchar was the grandson of Anchen. In the first year of the *Taiding* era (1324) she was conferred the title of Empress.

Emperor Taiding had two Imperial Concubines: one was called Bihan, and the other one was called Sukedali. They were all the daughters of Prince of Yan, Maizhuhan, from the Onggirat tribe. In the early years of the *Tianli* era during Wenzong's reign they were both exiled to Dong'an Zhou.

¹⁷ Yisün Temür.



19. Mailaidi. Empress of Mingzong

The *Zhen Yu Hui Sheng* (chaste, generous, illustrious, and holy) Empress of Mingzong,¹⁸ Mailaidi, gave birth to Shundi and then died. When Wenzong ascended the throne, she was posthumously conferred the title of *Zhen yu hui sheng* Empress.

¹⁸ Mingzong is the temple name of Khoshila.



20. Babusha (?-1330), Empress of Qoshila
(Mingzong)



21. Empress of Qoshila (Mingzong),
name unknown.

Empress Babusha was the daughter of Princess Shouning who was the niece of Chengzong. She started to serve Mingzong when he was still a Prince, and gave birth to Ningzong. In the second year of the *Tianli* era (1329) the Ninghui Temple was established to manage the palace affairs of the Empress of Mingzong, and ten thousand *tings* of money and two thousand *pi* of silk were appropriated for the consumption of this Empress' palace. In the eleventh month, the Empress asked [the Emperor] to pray for the happiness of Mingzong in the nether world. Then the Imperial Teacher was ordered to lead all the monks to perform Buddhist services for seven days at the Datianyuan Yansheng Temple. Taoist monks built sacrificial altars [to her] in the four palaces of Yuxu, Tianbao, Taiyi, and Wanshou, as well as on the two mountains of Wudang and Longhu. In the first year of the *Zhishun* era (1330), the administrative bureau was ordered to supply the Empress' palace of Mingzong with two hundred *pi* of silk. She died in the fourth month of this year.

Empress Budashili of Wenzong¹⁹ was from the Onggirat clan. Her father was the Imperial Son-in-law, Diao'ebula, and her mother was the Princess of the State of Lu, Sanggelaji. When Wenzong lived at Jianye, this Empress was with him. When Wenzong ascended the throne in the first year of the *Tianli* era (1328), she was conferred the title of Empress. In the second year [of Tianli] she was presented with the conferment along with a certificate and a seal. In the eleventh month of the same year the Empress spent fifty thousand *liang* of silver to assist the construction of the Dachengtian Husheng Temple. In the first year of the *Zhishun* era (1330) she granted four hundred *qing* of land that was the property confiscated from Zhang Gui, to the Husheng Temple as its permanent property. Later, together with the eunuch Baizhu, she murdered the Empress of Mingzong, Babusha.

In the eighth month of the third year [of the *Zhishun* era] (1332), Wenzong died in Shangdu. The Empress made known and obeyed the Emperor's initial intention and latest order, and put the second son of Mingzong, Yilinzhiban, who became Ningzong, on the throne. In the eleventh month of the same year, she was presented with a jade book and a jade treasure (seal), and was conferred the title of Empress Dowager. In the twelfth month she received the congratulations of all the officials in the Xingsheng Palace. When Ningzong died, the ministers suggested that she enthrone the Crown Prince Yantiegusi, but she said, "The Emperor's position is extremely important. My son is still young. The eldest son of Mingzong, Tuohuan-tiemur, is in Guangxi, and is now thirteen years old. It is appropriate to put him on the throne." Then the minister followed her order to bring Tuohuan-tiemur to the capital. In the sixth month of the next year (1333) Shundi ascended the throne. In the first year of the *Yuantong* era (1334), she was respectfully titled as Great Empress Dowager, and remained present in court to receive ministerial reports. In the sixth month of the sixth year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1340), the Emperor issued a decree to deprive her of all respectful titles and exiled her to Dung'an Zhou. She died soon after.

¹⁹ Wenzong is the temple name of Tuq Temür.



22. Daliyetemishi (?-1368), Empress of Irinjibal (Ningzong)

Empress Daliyetemishi of Ningzong²⁰ was from the Onggirat clan. She was designated as Empress in the tenth month of the third year of the *Zhishun* era (1332). She died in the twenty-eighth year of the *Zhizheng* era (1368), and was buried and received sacrifices together with Ningzong.

²⁰ Ningzung is the temple name of Irinjibal.



23. Danashili (?-1335), Empress of Toqon Temür (Shundi)

Empress Danashili of Shundi²¹ was the daughter of Prince of Taiping, Yantiemur, from the Chipchaq clan. In the fourth year of the *Zhishun* era (1333), she was designated as Empress, and in the second year of the *Yuantong* era (1334), she was presented with a conferment book and a seal. The conferment book reads, “...Empress Chipchaq, you are elegant, sedate, kind, modest, quiet, refined and gentle. Your grandfathers and your father have been open-minded and determined. They have been of great assistance in governing the country...” In the third year [of *Yuantong*] (1335), the Empress’s elder brother, Tang Qishi, the chief censor, was executed because of his conspiring against the Emperor. The Empress’s younger brother, Talahai, fled into her palace and hid there. The Empress used her clothes to disguise him. Therefore she was moved out of the palace, and the Chancellor Boyan poisoned her in a private house in Kaiping.

²¹ Shundi is temple name of Toqon Temür.

Empress Boyanhudu was the daughter of the Prince of Yude, Boluotiemur, from the Onggirat clan. Boluotiemur was the nephew of the *Xuan Ci Hui Sheng* Empress, Zhenge. In the third month of the third year of the *Zhiyuan* era (1337), she was conferred the title of Empress. ...She gave birth to Prince Zhenjin who died when he was two years old.

The Empress was thrifty and never jealous. She always kept herself within the bounds of rules and etiquette. The Secondary Empress Qishi lived in the West Palace of Xingsheng and was favored by the Emperor. The Emperor rarely went to the East palace. The servants of the Empress had concerns and gossiped about this, but the Empress had almost no complaints. Once she traveled with the Emperor on an imperial inspection tour of Shangdu, and on the way, they had a stop-over. The Emperor sent a eunuch to deliver a decree [to the Empress] that he wanted to visit her, but the Empress declined and said, "Night time is not the appropriate time for you, the most revered and respected, to come." The eunuch went back and forth three times, but she always refused to receive him. Thus the Emperor deemed that she was most virtuous. The Emperor had once asked her, "The Zhongzheng Yuan often withdrew money and grain on your orders. Do you still remember this?" The Empress answered, "If I need to do so, I will withdraw some. As for things related to income and expenses, I found it necessary to entrust someone to take charge of them. How can I remember all of them?" When she lived in the Kunde Palace, she sat up straight all day long, and never went outside the door wantonly. She died in the eighth month of the twenty-fifth year of the Zhizheng era (1365), when she was forty-two years old. When Empress Qi saw that the clothing she had left were so old and shabby, she laughed loudly and said, "As the Principal Empress, what need was there for her to wear such clothes!" From this we know how thrifty she was. One month later, the Crown Prince returned from Jining, and wept sincerely for her.

Empress Wanzhehudu, Qishi, who was a Korean, gave birth to the Crown Prince Aiyoushilidala. Her family was of very low origin. After she became Empress, they became rich and powerful and three generations of her family were conferred posthumously the title of Princes. Initially, she was introduced by the servant Tumandier of the Huizheng Yuan. As a maid in the palace, she was mainly responsible for serving Shundi tea. She was very clever and crafty, and gradually came to be favored by Shundi. Later, Empress Danashili was jealous of her, flogged her with a whip, and insulted her frequently. When Empress Danashili was murdered, the Emperor intended to designate her as Empress, but the Chancellor Boyan pleaded with

the Emperor not to do so. After Boyan was dismissed from the Chancellor's office, Shalaban suggested that the Emperor designate her as the secondary Empress. She was settled in the Xingsheng Palace, and the Huizheng Yuan was renamed as Zizheng Yuan.

In her spare time, the Empress read the Classics of Female Filial Piety (*Nü Xiao Jing*) and historical books, trying to learn about those virtuous Empresses of past dynasties, so as to take them as models. When there were rare delicacies in the tribute from other states, she would first send somebody to present them to the ancestral temple, and only then would she eat them. In the eighteenth year of the *Zhizheng* era (1341), a severe famine occurred in the capital. The Empress ordered officials to make porridge to feed the famine victims, and she donated her own gold, silver, millet, and clothes to them. She ordered Piaobuhua, the Commissioner of the Zizheng Yuan, to buy graveyards at the eleven gates of the capital, where they buried more than one hundred thousand bodies. Then she ordered Buddhist monks to set up a "water and land assembly" (*shui lu da hui*) to redeem their lost souls by making offerings and saying prayers.

At that time Shundi was tired of governmental affairs. The Empress schemed with the Crown Prince Ayoushilidala to force the Emperor to abdicate and hand over the throne to his son. They sent Piaobuhua to make known their intention to the Chancellor Taiping, but Taiping took no notice of them. Then the Empress invited Taiping to her palace, bestowed wine on him, and personally repeated her previous request. But Taiping again refused her. From then on the Empress and the Crown Prince detested him. When the Emperor learned of the Empress' intention, he was angry, and estranged himself from her by refusing to see her for two months. Piaobuhua had been favored because of the Empress, but now he was in the process of being impeached and dismissed from office, and the Empress tried to persuade Chief Censor, Fojianu, to defend him. However, Fojianu planned to impeach Piaobuhua even further, and when the Empress discovered this, she instigated the other censors to impeach Fojianu, and had him demoted to Chaohe.

Initially, the people of Qishi's clan in Korea took advantage of the Empress' power and became more and more arrogant and overbearing. The Korean king became angry and killed them all. In the twenty-third year [of the *Zhizheng* era] (1363), the Empress complained to the Crown Prince, "Why don't you avenge me?" They designated a man of the Korean royal family who had stayed in the capital of China, as the [new] king, and designated man of the Qi clan, Sanpaonu, as the Crown Prince (*yuanzi*). At the same time, they designated Cuitiemur, the Co-Director of the Department

of Military Affairs, as the [Korean] Chancellor. They dispatched an army of ten thousand soldiers, recruited Japanese soldiers, and marched to Korea. [this force] had just crossed the Yalu River, when Korean troops suddenly appeared from all directions. They suffered a crushing defeat, with only seventeen cavalry troops escaping. The Empress was very ashamed.

In the seventh month of the twenty-fourth year, Boluotiemur led troops to assault the capital. The Crown Prince fled to Jining, and gave orders to send armed forces to suppress Boluotiemur. Angered, Boluotiemur incited the Censorial Inspector, Wu Qizong, to accuse the Empress of interfering in state affairs. Wu Qizong suggested that the Emperor should move her outside of the capital, but the Emperor did not permit this. In the third month of the twenty-fifth year (1365), [Boluotiemur] delivered a false imperial edict and put the Empress under house arrest at the Administration Office of *semus* and ordered his co-conspirator, Yaoboyanbuhua, to guard her. On the day of *gengyin* of the fourth month, Boluotiemur forced the Empress to return to her palace to fetch her seal, and then he forged a letter from the Empress to summon the Crown Prince. The Empress was then again returned to the prison. Later, the Empress made a gift to Boluotiemur of several beautiful girls, and after one hundred days, she finally returned to her palace. Only after Boluotiemur died, was the Crown Prince recalled to the capital. The Empress delivered an imperial edict to Kuokuotiemur, ordering him to send troops to accompany the Crown Prince, in an attempt to force the Emperor to abdicate, and hand over the throne to the Prince. Kuokuotiemur discerned her intention, and when they arrived at a place thirty *li* from the capital he ordered his troops to return to their camps leaving the enmity of the Crown Prince. This can be seen in the biography of Kuokuotiemur.

At that time, the Empress Boyanhudu died. In the twelfth month, the ministers of the Secretarial Council presented a memorial to the Emperor, saying that the Empress [Qi] should be designated as the principal Empress, but the Emperor did not yet give his permission. Then they presented another memorial to him, suggesting that the name of the *Zi Zheng Yuan* be changed to *Chong Zheng Yuan*, to remain under the supervision of the *Zhong Zheng Yuan*. The Emperor then conferred upon her an entitlement book and various treasures. The entitlement book read: "...[you] Suliangho Shi, were born to a illustrious family, and came to serve me. You have been prudent and diligent day and night. You have been respectful and frugal and set a good example for others for years. You have given birth to the Crown Prince who will carry on future generations. Therefore, it is proper for you to occupy the position of the Principal Empress. Our relatives and ministers have presented many memorials to me about this. All the people in the imperial harem wish

you to occupy the respectful position. Since you have modestly declined many times, this deed should be especially praised. Now I send this Grand Commandant, with my edict, to present you with the jade certificate and seal and appoint you to the position of Empress...” In the twenty-eighth year (1365), she followed the Emperor to flee to the north.

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The *Xian Yi Zhuang Sheng* (illustrious, beautiful, sedate, and holy) Empress of Ruizong,²² ***Suoluhetieni***, was from the Kereit tribe. She gave birth to Xianzong and Shizu who became Emperors successively. In the second year of the Zhiyuan era (1265)²³ she was posthumously titled *Zhuang Sheng* Empress, and was buried together with Ruizong.

In the twelfth month of the second year of the *Zhida* era (1309) she was additionally titled *Xian Yi Zhuang Sheng* Empress. In the tenth month of the third year [of the Zhiyuan era] she was presented with the jade letter of imperial edict.

The *Hui ren yu sheng* (illustrious, kind, generous, and holy) Empress of Yuzong²⁴ ***Bolanyeqiechi***, whose other name was Kuokuozhen, was from the Onggirat tribe. She gave birth to Shunzong and Chengzong.

Once when Shizu went out to hunt, on his way he felt thirsty, so he went to a tent, where he saw a girl weaving camel's hair. Shizu asked her for some mare milk. The girl said, "We have mare milk, but my parents and brothers are not home right now. I am a girl and cannot give it to you." Shizu was about to leave, but the girl said, "I am here alone. If you come and leave, it would not be proper according to courtesy. My parents will come back soon, please just wait for a while." Soon her parents returned home, and they presented mare milk to Shizu to drink. When Shizu left he was full of praise of her. He said, "If I can get such a girl as my daughter-in-law, would that not be a wonderful thing?" Later, Shizu met with his ministers to discuss selecting an Imperial Concubine for the Crown Prince. He was not satisfied with any of the candidates. An old minister had heard Shizu's previous words, and knew that the girl had not been married off, so he told Shizu about it. Shizu was extremely delighted, and selected her as the imperial concubine for the Crown Prince.

²² Ruizong is the temple name of Tolui.

²³ It should be the third year of the Zhiyuan era (1266).

²⁴ Yuzong is the temple name of Jin Gim, the son of Khubilai

This Empress showed great filial piety and prudence, and served well in the palace of Shizu. Shizu always called her “virtuous daughter-in-law.” (*xian de xifu*) When she served the *Zhao rui shun sheng* Empress,²⁵ she never left her. She would even rub the papers in the washroom on her face to make it soft for her [the *Zhao rui shun sheng* Empress]. One day, when Yuzong was ill, Shizu went to see him. When he saw the golden brocade mattress on the bed, he was unhappy and said to her, “I have thought you are virtuous, why have you [made his bed] like this?” The Empress knelt down and replied, “We usually never dare to use it. Now that the Crown Prince is ill, I am afraid that he will get eczema. Therefore I used it for him.” She immediately removed it from the bed.

When Shizu died, Chengzong arrived at Shangdu, and all the Princes met together. Previously, the Vice-Chief Censor, Cui Yu, received a jade seal from Shide, the great grandson of King Muqali, and the characters read, “You have received the Mandate of Heaven, and you will have a long life and be prosperous.” Then he presented it to the Empress. At this time, she personally presented it to Chengzong. When Chengzong ascended the throne, he titled the Empress respectfully as Empress Dowager...He ordered an official office, *Hui Zheng Yuan*, established for her. Later, the officials of the *Hui Zheng Yuan* received seven hundred *qing*²⁶ of land in the west of Zhejiang and put it under the name of the Empress dowager, but she said, “I am a widowed woman, and I already have enough food and clothing. Besides, the lands south of the Yangzi River all belong to the state, how can I take it as my own property?” and she immediately ordered the Secretariat Council to dismiss the officials who accepted the lands. When the Empress Dowager’s younger brother wanted to obtain an official position through her, she told him, “If you want a position, you should apply for it yourself. Do not make trouble for me.” Later, her younger brother was actually dismissed from his position. People were all convinced that she had prophetic vision.

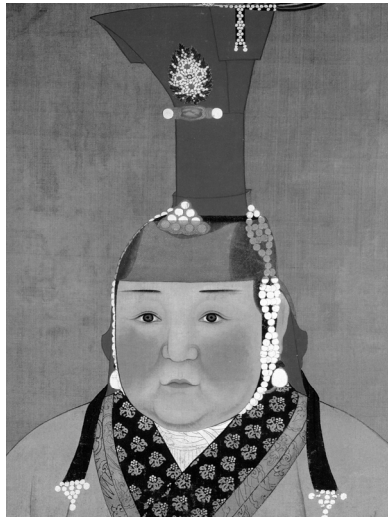
She died in the second month of the fourth year of the Dade era (1300), and was buried in the Crown Prince Zhenjin’s tomb. She was posthumously titled *Yu sheng* Empress, and was offered sacrifices in the temple of Yuzong. In the tenth month of the third year of the *Zhida* era (1310), she was additionally titled *Hui ren yu sheng* Empress.

²⁵ Temple title of Chabui, the Empress of Khubilai Khan.

²⁶ One *qing* is equal to 100 *mu*, or 16.44 acres.

The *Xuan Yi Shu Sheng* (refined, gentle, virtuous, and holy) Empress of Xianzong,²⁷ **Puyanqielimishi**, was from the Onggirat tribe. Xianzong married her when he lived in the official residence in Jin. She gave birth to Emperor Taiding.

In the first year of the *Taiding* era (1324) she was posthumously titled *Xuan Yi Shu Sheng* Empress...She was added to the temple of Xianzong. In the early years of the *Tianli* era, sacrifices were resumed in Xianzong's temple.



23. Daji (?-1323), Empress Dowager, wife of Tarmabala (Shunzong).²⁸

The *Zhao Xian Yuan Sheng* (illustrious, dedicated, original, and holy) Empress of Shunzong,²⁹ **Daji**, was the daughter of Hundutiemur from the Onggirat tribe. Hundutiemur was the grandson of Anchen. When Yuzong lived at the official residence of Yan and the Chao River, Shunzong was

²⁷ Xianzong is the temple name of Ganmala.

²⁸ The identification of this woman has been controversial. According to Hakanchulun, this painting was tagged “Taji” in the collection of the Palace Museum in Taiwan. But in an album of paintings published in Inner Mongolia, this woman is believed to be Shiliandali, the Empress of Chengzong. (see Hakanchulun, *Menggu Kehan yu Kedun*. The Mongolian Kings and Queens, Taipei, Zhonghua Minguo Menggu Wenhua Xiehui, (1992):1) Another album of paintings published in the year of Jiazi (1924) confirms that this woman was Daji (see Temugetu (ed.) *YuanchaoLidai di hou xiang*, Beiping.Mengwen Shushe Jiazi Nian).

²⁹ Shunzong is the temple name of Dalamabala.

there to serve him. When he became older, Shizu granted him a maidservant, née Guo. Later, he married the Empress who gave birth to Wuzong and Renzong.

In the ninth year of the Dade era (1305), Chengzong was seriously ill. Empress Buluhan was in charge of government affairs, and she exiled Renzong and his mother out of the capital to Huaizhou. In the twelfth month of the tenth year of the Dade era, the Empress arrived at Huaizhou. In the first month of the eleventh year of the Dade era (1307), Chengzong died. At that time Wuzong was commanding troops on the northern frontier. The Chancellor of the Right, *Dalahan*³⁰ Halahasun, secretly sent envoys to report it to Renzong. [Renzong] immediately returned to the capital with the Empress. The Empress and Renzong entered the mourning hall to mourn, then went out to live in their old residence. Every morning and evening they went to the mourning hall to make offerings to the spirit of the dead. In the mean time they sent envoys to greet Wuzong's return to the capital, before he ascended to the throne in the fifth month.

Initially, the Empress-Dowager gave her two sons' astrological charts to a fortune-teller, and asked the fortune-teller which should be made the Emperor. The answer was, "There will be a disaster when the son born in the year of *Chongguang dahuangluo* ascends the throne, but the son born in the year of *Zhanmeng zuo'e* will rule a long time." Chongguang was the birth-year of Wuzong, and *Zhanmeng* was the birth-year of Renzong. The Empress-Dowager was deeply confused by his words. She then sent her close minister, Duoer, to tell Wuzong, "You two brothers were both born to me, [so] how could I have different relationships with you? We cannot, however, ignore the words of the fortune-teller about the long and short-term fortunes of the throne." When Wuzong heard this, he said nothing, but he called in Kangli Tuotuo and told him, "I have been guarding the northern frontier for ten years, and I am the oldest brother in the family. The Empress Dowager uses the fortune-teller's words as an excuse, and they are hard to believe. If my rule satisfies the will of heaven and the hearts of the people, then even if I am on the throne for as short as one day, it is enough to leave my name for ten thousand years. How could she believe the fortune-teller's words, and change the entrustment of the ancestors?" Tuotuo forwarded these words to the Empress-dowager. She was stunned, and said, "Although the prediction of long and short rule was from the fortune-teller, I also have a long vision for you, because I deeply love you. Since you have said this, then you should come immediately." The details can be seen in the biography of Kangli Tuotuo.

³⁰ Mo. *Darhan*, freeman.

In the fifth month, Wuzong ascended the throne. He titled the Empress as Empress Dowager in the same day. He also designated Renzong as Crown Prince. The three palaces were in harmony. In the eleventh month, the Emperor paid respect to the Empress Dowager in the Longfu Palace, and presented her with a jade certificate and a jade seal. In the third month of the first year of the *Zhida* era (1308), the Emperor built the Xingsheng Palace for the Empress dowager, and presented her with cash of five thousand *tings*, and silk of twenty thousand *jins* (10,000 kilograms). In the first month of the second year, the Empress Dowager went to the Wutai Mountain to hold Buddhist ceremonies. She called on the Korean king, Wang Zhang, to go with her. In the fourth month, [the Emperor] established the General Administration for the Properties and Taxes of the Jiangsu and Anhui (*Jiang Huai caifu zongguanfu*) of the Xingsheng Palace, to deal with the money and grain for the consumption of the Empress Dowager. In the second month of the third year, [the Emperor] held a sacrificial ceremony in the southern suburb to announce the entitlement of the Empress Dowager. In the fourth month, [the Emperor] allocated four thousand households of Falconer Town (*Ying fang*) belonging to the *Xingsheng* Palace and settled them in Liaoyang, and established a Myriarch Administration (*wan hu fu*) to govern them. On the *wushen* day of the fourth month, the Emperor led the Crown Prince, all the Princes, and palace officials to visit the *Xingsheng* Palace, to grant the Empress Dowager a respectful title, and to present her with a certificate and a seal. The characters of her title are “*Yitian xingsheng ciren zhaoyi shouyuan* (dignified, flourishing, mercy, longevity, and original) Empress Dowager.” On the *gengxu* day, the Empress Dowager offered thanks in the Imperial Ancestral Temple. Because the Empress Dowager received the respectful title, [the Emperor] issued an imperial edict to give a general pardon to all the people under heaven. In the fourth year (1311), Renzong ascended the throne. In the third month of the second year in the *Yanyou* era (1315), the Emperor led all the Princes and officials in presenting the Empress Dowager with a jade certificate and seal. More characters were added to her titles, “*Yitian xingsheng ciren zhaoyi Shouyuan Quande Taining Fuqing* (dignified, flourishing, mercy, longevity, original, all-virtuous, peaceful, blessed) Empress Dowager”.

In the seventh year of the *Yanyou* era (1320), Yingzong ascended the throne. In the twelfth month, the Emperor titled the Empress Dowager as Great Empress Dowager (*Tai huangtaihou*), the entitlement letter reads: “...your virtue has surpassed the *Tu* Mountain. Your beneficence is higher than the *Wenmu*. Therefore four characters should be added to your title...Now we respectfully present you with the jade certificate and seal,

expanding your title as *Yitian xingsheng ciren zhaoyi shouyuan quande taining fuqing huiwen chongyou* Empress Dowager.”

On the *bingchen* day, the Great Empress Dowager went to the Daming Palace to receive court congratulations. On the *wushen* day, she offered thanks to the Imperial Ancestral Temple. The Empress Dowager had seen that Mingzong had a heroic spirit when he was young, while Yingzong was relatively weak. [at the court] those of evil temperament believed that it would not be to their benefit if Mingzong should ascend the throne. Therefore they supported putting Yingzong on the throne. When Yingzong ascended the throne, the Empress Dowager came to congratulate him, but Yingzong clearly expressed in his facial expression, his displeasure with her. When the Empress Dowager returned she felt regret, and said, “I should not have raised a son such as this!” Soon she fell ill, with a grievance in her heart, and she died in the second month of the third year of the *Zhizhi* era (1323). She was buried together with Shunzong.³¹

This Empress Dowager was naturally intelligent. She assisted three Emperors in governing the country. She taught the maidservants in the palace to do needlework, and she herself personally did housework. However, she was careless of her own conduct. Once she occupied the principal position of the Palace, she became ever more lascivious and unrestrained. In her palace, she trusted Hei Lü’s mother Yilieshiba; outside her palace she favored Shiliemen, Niulin, and the then-chancellor Diemutier who acted in collusion with each

other, and they even insulted and flogged the Director of Political Affairs, Zhang Gui, stopping at nothing and fouling court affairs. When Ying zong ascended the throne, all her favorites were killed, and their forces rapidly extinguished.

³¹ There is an error about the date of her death. According to the basic annals of Yingzong in the *Yuanshi*, Daji died in 1322. See YS 28:624. There is a record “The Great Empress Dowager died” under *bingchen* day of the ninth month of the second year of the *Zhizhi* era. This should be the correct date of her death. In addition, under *Wushen* day of the third month of the third year of the *Zhizhi* era there is a record saying “the Great Empress Dowager was worshiped in the temple of Shunzong.” See YS 28:629.

APPENDIX III

Reign Periods of Mongol Khans and Yuan Emperors

Personal Name	Temple Name	Reign Period	Comments
Chinggis Khan	Taizu	1206–1227	1162–1227. 1189 became the leader of the Mongol Nirun tribe. Conquered the tribes of Tartar, Naiman, and Kereit, and unified Mongolia. 1206 became Mongol Khan, called Chinggis Khan. Mongol Empire was founded.
Tolui	Ruizong	1227–1228 (Regent)	1193–1232. After Chinggi Khan died in 1227, Tolui became regent. 1229 Ögödei ascended throne. Tolui was ordered to conquer the Jin and died in Henan.
Ögödei	Taizong	1229–1241	1186–1241. Ascended throne in 1229. Conquered Jin in 1234.
Töregene		1241–1245 (Regent)	?–1246. A Naiman woman. The sixth wife of Ögödei. The five years of Töregene's government was a disaster for the Mongol empire.
Güyük	Dingzong	1246–1248	1206–1248. 1241 Ögödei designated his grandson Shiremün as heir-apparent. 1246 Töregene disobeyed Ögödei's will and put her own son Güyük on the throne.
Ogul Qaimish		1248–1251 (Regent)	Third empress of Güyük. 1248 Güyük died, she became regent for 3 years. She intended to put Shiremün on the throne but failed. When Möngke ascended the throne, she was put to death.
Möngke	Xianzong	1251–1259	1208–1259. With the support of his mother Sorghaghtani-Beki and Batu, he ascended the throne in 1251. 1258 launched a conquering war against Southern Song, 1259 died in Sichuan.

Khubilai	Shizu	1260–1294 Chongtung 1260–64 Zhiyuan 1264–94	1215–1294. In 1251 he was ordered by Möngke to govern the Chinese territories in the south of Mongolia. 1259 commanded Mongol troops to attack Ezhou of the Southern Song. When Möngke died, he was involved in the struggles for throne with his younger brother Arigh Böke. 1260, he ascended throne in Kaiping without the election of <i>khuriltai</i> and started to use Chinese reign title Zhongtong. In 1264 he moved his capital from Karakorum to Dadu. In 1271 he used Yuan as his dynasty title. 1279 he conquered the Southern Song, and China was unified.
Temür Öljeitü	Chengzong	1295–1307 Yuanchen (3) 1295–97, Dade (11) 1297–1307	1265–1307. Grandson of Khubilai. Because his father, the crown prince Jin-gim, died early, he was designated the heir-apparent.
Khaishan	Wuzong	1308–1311– Zhida 1308– 11	1281–1311. When Chengzong died in 1307, Ayurbarvada, nephew of Chengzong, became the regent, and put his elder brother Khaishan on the throne.
Ayurbarvada	Renzong	1312–1320 Huangqing 1312–1313(2) Yanyou 1314–1320(7)	1285–1320. When Khaishan ascended the throne, Ayurbarvada was designated heir-apparent. When Khaishan died, he succeeded to the throne.
Shidebala	Yingzong	1321–1323 Zhizhi 1321– 23 (3)	1303–1323. Son of Renzong, succeeded to the throne when Wenzong died. His radical political reforms infringed upon the interests of some Mongol nobles and therefore he was assassinated by Tieshi and other political opponents in the “Nanpo incident” in the 8 th month of 1323.
Yisün Temür	Taidingdi	1324–1328 Taiding 1324–28 (5), Zhihe 1328 (1)	1293–1328. When Shidebala was assassinated, Yisün Temür ascended the throne in the 9 th month of 1323 in Mongolia with the support of Tieshi, the assassin in the “Nanpo incident” and other Mongol nobles.

Arigiba/ Aragibag	Tianshundi	1328— Tianshun (9 th month–10 th month) (one month)	1320–?. When Taidingdi died, a palace coup occurred in Dadu. Yantiemur, the deputy administrator of the Department of Military Affairs, gathered all officials in the Xingsheng Palace and announced their decision to enthroned Tuq Temür, the second son of Wuzong. The Chancellor Daolasha put the crown prince Arigiba on the throne in Shandu in the 9 th month of 1328. In the 10 th month of the same year Tuq Temür's troops captured Shangdu. Arigiba was missing.
Tuq Temür	Wenzong	1328–1329 Tianli 9 th month, 1328– 1 st month, 1329 (5 months)	1304–1332. In the 9 th month of 1328 he was put on the throne by Yantiemur. In the first month of 1329 Khoshila ascended the throne in Mongolia. In the 3 rd month of the same year Tuq Temür sent envoys to pay respect to Khoshila and inform him of his willing to hand over the throne to Khoshila. In the 4 th month Khoshila designated Tuq Temür crown prince. In the 8 th month on the way to Dadu Khoshila was murdered by Tuq Temür. Tuq Temür restored himself to the throne.
Khoshila	Mingzong	1229— 1 st month–8 th month (7 months)	1300–1329. In the 9 th month of 1328 Tuq Temür was put on the throne. In the first month of 1329 Khoshila ascended the throne and became Mingzong. In the 8 th month of the same year, Tuq Temür murdered Khoshila.
Tuq Temür	Wenzong	1329–1332 Tianli 1328– 30 (3) Zhishun 1330–1332	

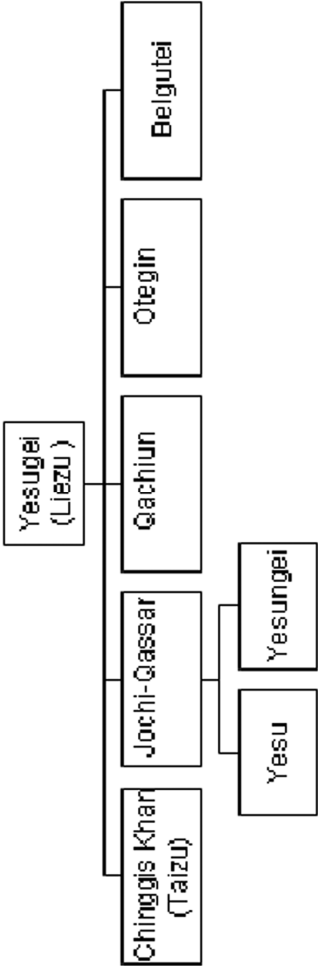
Irinjibal	Ningzong	1332— Zhishun (43 days)	1326–1332. The second son of Khoshila. In the 8 th month of 1332 Tuq Temür died. His empress Budashili put Irinjibal on the throne in the 10 th month of 1332. He died in the 11 th month.
Toqon Temür	Shundi	1333–1368 Yuantong 1333–1335, Zhiyuan 1335–1340, Zhizheng 1340–1368	1320–1370. When Irinjibal died, Empress Budashili decided to put Toqon Temür, the first son of Mingzong, on the throne. Toqon Temür ascended the throne in the 6 th month of 1333. In 1351 the Red Scarf Rebellion broke out. 1368 Zhu Yuanzhang's troops captured Dadu. The Yuan dynasty ended. Toqon Temür ran to the north, and died in 1370.

SOURCES: Du Jianmin, ed., *Zhongguo lidai diwang shixi nianbiao*, Qilu Shushe, 1995.
 Shao Yechang, ed., *Zhongguo lichao diwang gailan*, Changchun Chubanshe, 1989.
 Huhewendur, “Menggu kehan shixi lu” , *Zhongguo Menggushi xuehui lunwen xuanji*,
 Neimenggu Renmin Chubanshe, 1986.

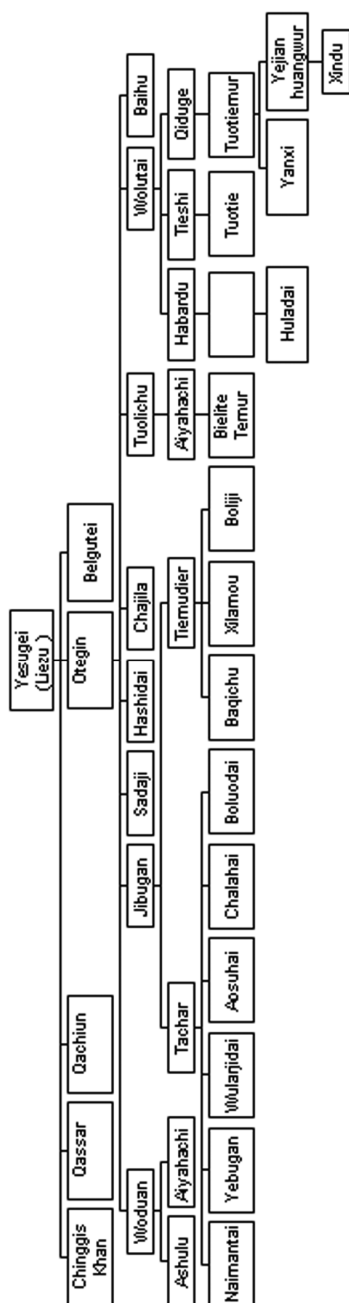
APPENDIX IV

Genealogical Tables of the Mongol Royal Clan

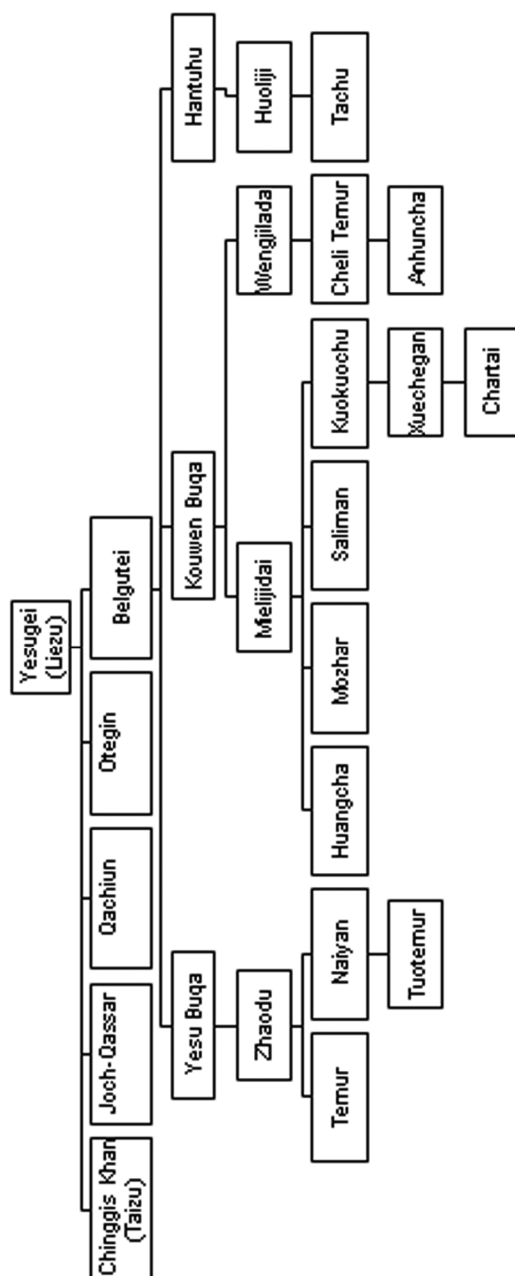
1. House of Yesugei



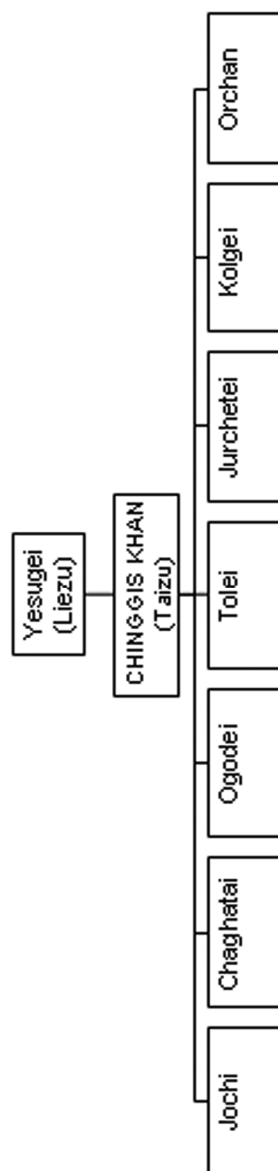
2. House of Otegin



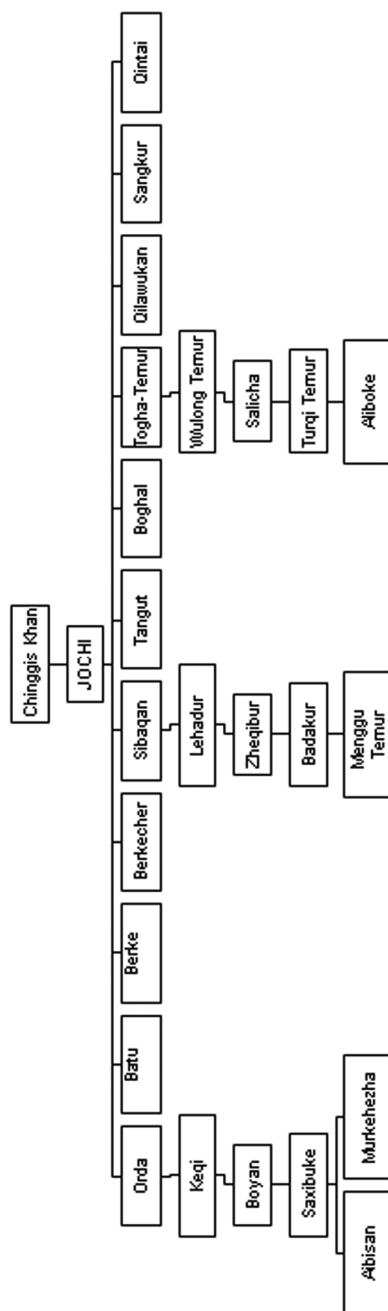
3. House of Belgutei



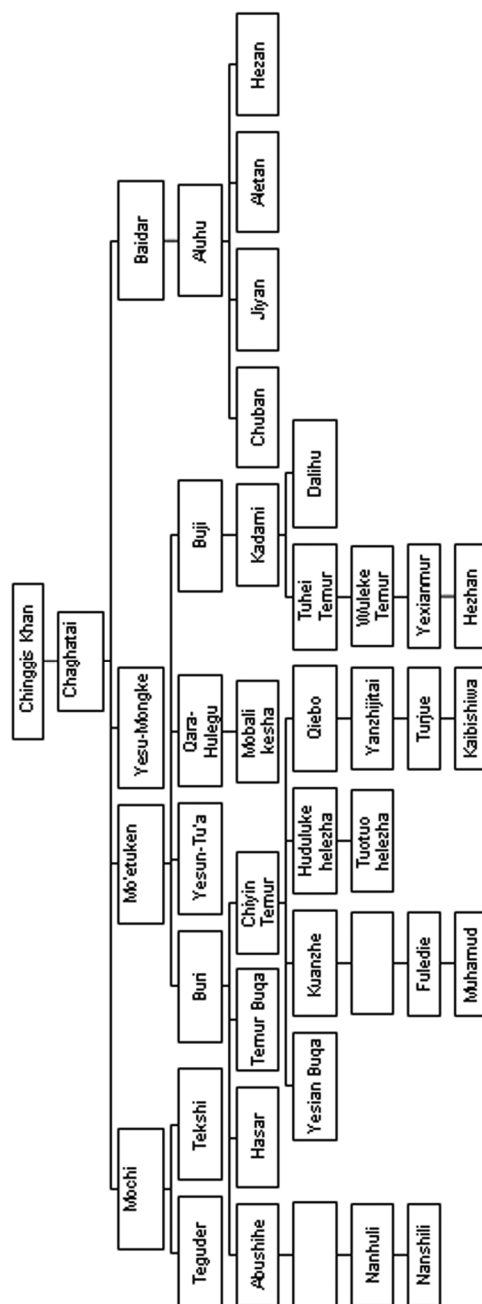
4. House of Chinggis Khan



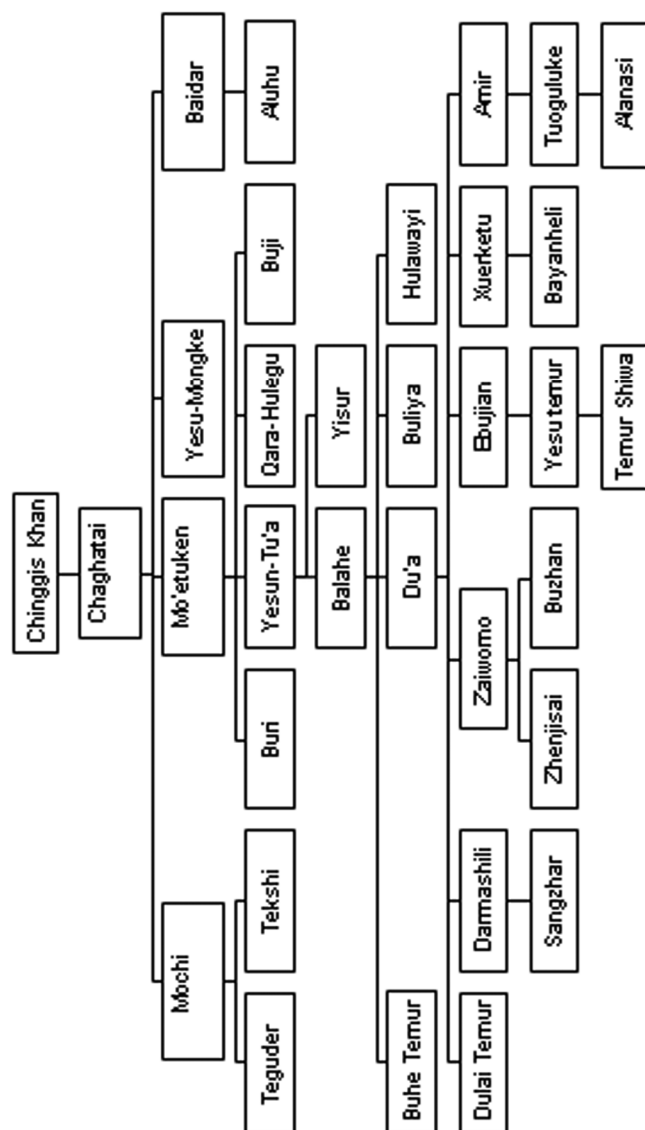
6. House of Jochi



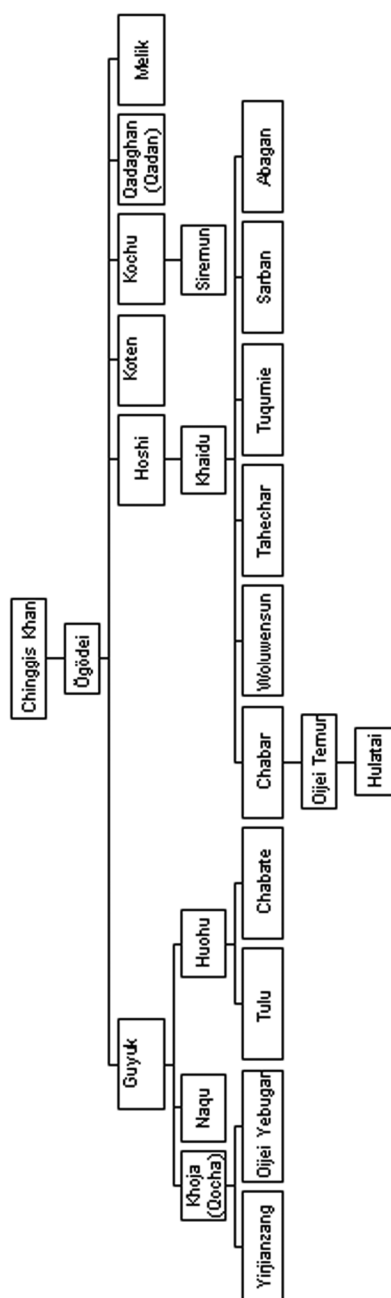
7. House of Chaghatai



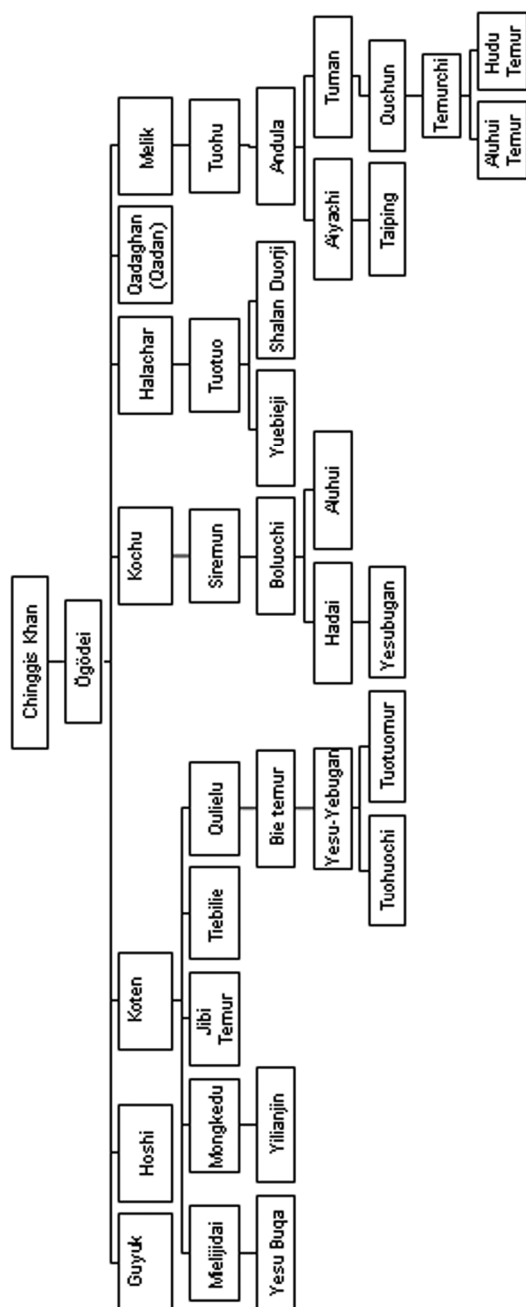
8. House of Chaghatai



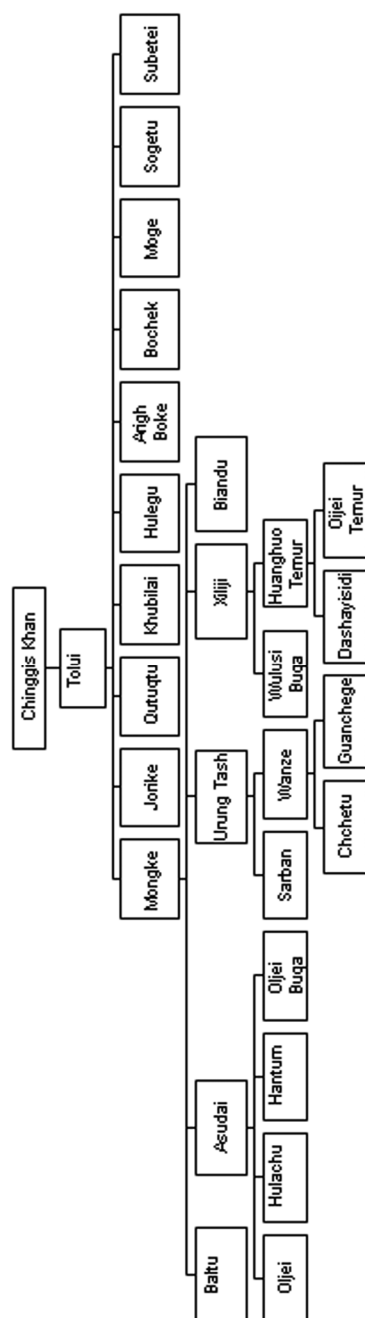
9. House of Ögödei



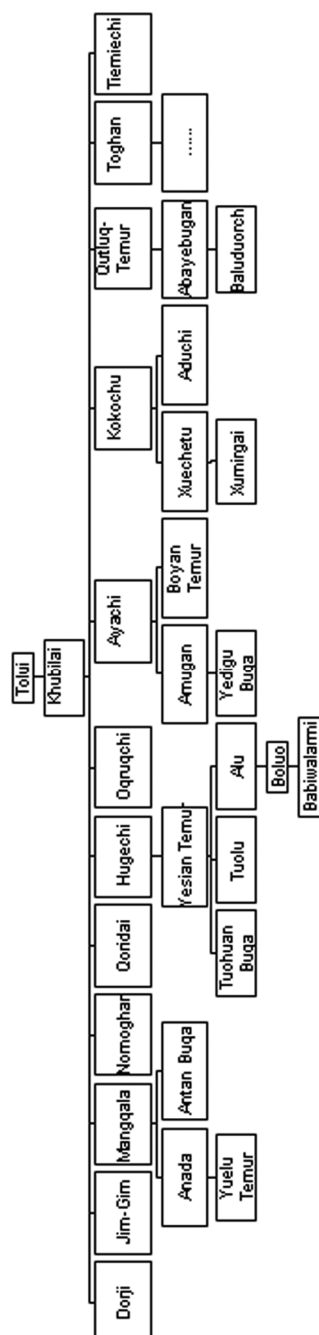
10. House of Ögödei



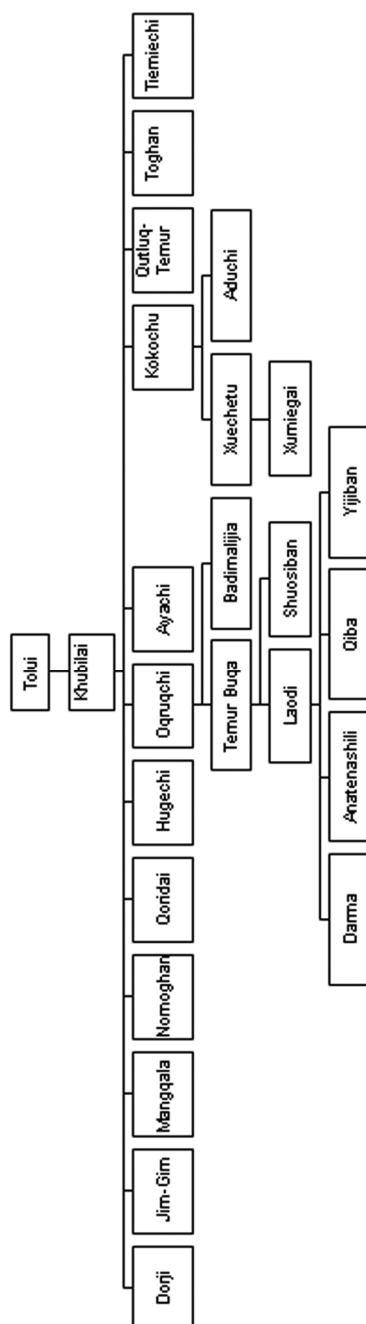
12. House of Tolui



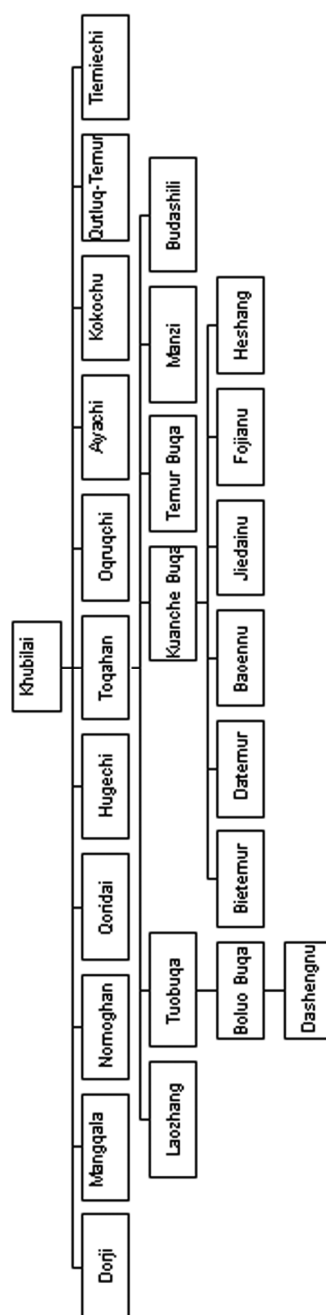
14. House of Khubilai Khan



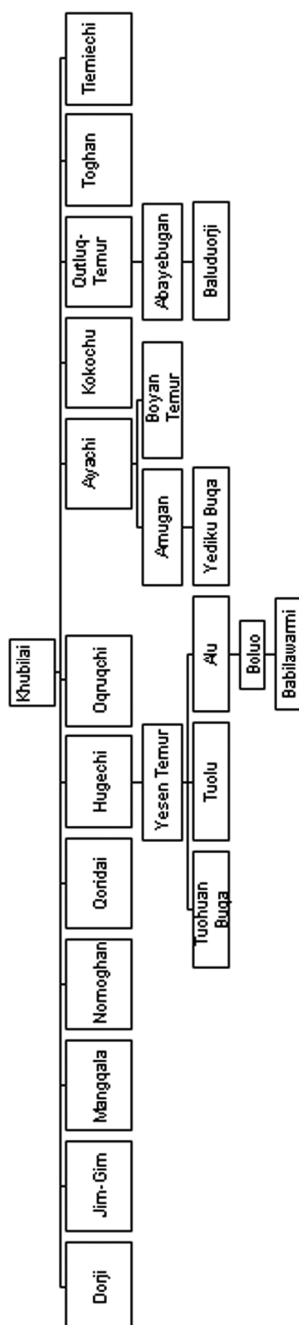
15. House of Khubilai Kahn



16. House of Khubilai Khan



17. House of Khubilai Khan



GLOSSARY

Abd al-Rahman (chn. *Audu-laheman* 奧都刺合曼), chief chancellor during Toregene's regency (1241-46).

Abishqa, son of Büri.

Aga, *m.* concubine.

Aha, *m.* chief.

Aha, 阿哈 son of Suor-Huodu 唆兒火都 of the Onggirat tribe.

Ahuruq 奧魯, place where the families of Mongol army remained.

Aiyashili/Aiyashiri 愛牙失里 daughter of Chengzong, 成宗, wife of Kuolijisi 闊里吉思 of the Öngüt Tribe.

Ala-al-Din-Malik: Ta'rikh-Jaaham-Gusha, The history of the world conqueror.

Alahai Beki/Alaqa Beki 阿刺海別吉, daughter of Chinggis Khan, married into the Öngüt tribe.

Alakhushi-Khuri, head of the Öngüt tribe.

Al-Altun Beki/Ilgaltun Beki/Iia-Altun Beki 阿勒-阿勒屯別吉, daughter of Chinggis Khan, married Barshukh Art Tegin 巴爾術阿爾忒的斤, the Iduq-qut (Idikut) of the Uighur tribe.

Alandar 阿藍答兒

Alanquoa 阿藍豁阿, female ancestor (*Mo. emegen*) of the Mongol tribe.

Alawusi Tijihuli 阿刺兀思·剔吉忽里, chief of the Öngüt tribe.

Alatena-shina 阿刺忒納答納, son of Wenzong.

Alchi / Anchi /Anchen 按陳, son of Dei Sechen.

Aleiquan 阿雷泉

Alijiashili 阿里嘉室利, son of Diao'a-Bula.

Alimali 阿力麻里

Ailiqmish, wife of Arigh Böke, daughter of Törölchi 脫劣勒赤 of the Oirat tribe.

Ariqachi 阿里合赤, wife of Töde-Möngke (third son of Toqoqan)

Altaju 按塔出, wife of Bayan, daughter of Dödei.

Altan Tobci 黃金史

Altan Uruh, Golden Clan.

Amoga 阿木哥, eldest son of Tarmabala.

Ananda 阿難答, Qghul son of Mangqala 忙哥刺(grandson of Khubilai).

Anda, *m.* sworn brother.

Anda 俺答

Antu 安禿, daughter of Kuochu 闊出(son of Ögödei), wife of Suorha of the Ikires tribe.

Araqutluq, daughter of Möngke-Temür, wife of Tarqai of the Oirat tribe.

Arghun 阿魯渾, Il-Khan of Persia (1284-1291).

Argun 阿爾古納河

Arigh Böke 阿里不哥, the youngest son of Tolui.

Ashi 阿失, grandson of Maizhuhan.

Ashituhulu/Ashi(q)tuqluq 阿失秃忽魯, daughter of the Mongol prince Nalahubuhua 乃刺忽不花, wife of Shuhunan of the Öngüt Tribe

Auljatai 完者臺, wife of Möngke-Temür 蒙哥帖木兒.

Aûrgneh/ Orqïna Khatun (Qara-Hülegü's wife).

Ayurbarvada 愛育黎拔力八達(Ren-zong) r.1312-1320, son of Tarmabala.

Ba'atur hero, a brave and strong man.

Babuhan 八不罕, Empress of Emperor Taiding.

Babusha 八不沙, Empress of Mingzong.

Baidasha 拜答沙, Mongol princess, wife of Maizhuhan of the Onggirat tribe.

Baïkal 貝加爾湖.

Baishen Ren 白身人

Baizhu 拜住, eunuch in Wenzong's reign.

Balashili 八剌失里, Prince of Chang.

Banzhuni River 班朱尼河

Baosi 褒姒, a favorite woman of the You Wang 幽王 of the Zhou dynasty.

Balashili 八剌失里, son of Ashi of the Ikires tribe.

Baragün-gar, *m.* right-wing

Bars-buqa/ Pârs-buqa, husband of Yantiemur, the daughter of Tolui.

Barshukh Art Tegin 巴爾術阿爾忒的斤, the Idu-qut (Idikut) of the Uighur tribe.

Batu Khan 拔都汗, son of Jochi.

Batur, *m.* warrior.

Bayalun 巴牙倫, wife of Temür-Buqa, sister of Hülegü's wife Qutui Khatun.

Bay'aut 伯要吾氏

Bayan Khudu 伯顏忽都, wife of Korean king Wang To, daughter of Amoga.

Bayan 伯顏

Bayan *m.* the rich, feudal lord

Begi 別吉, *m.* princess

Beki, *m.* official title

Belge, *m.* ceremony for engagement

Bengbula 迸不剌, son of Tuolian of the Onggirat tribe.

Bieli, *m.* daughter-in-law

Bige 必哥, the second son of Anchen.

Bihan 必罕, Empress of Emperor Taiding, daughter of Maizhuhan

- Bikl(a)mish (Bielimishi) 別里迷失, the great- grandson of Khuduqa Beki, the son of Pârsbuqa)
- Bilge, *m.* a good and wise man
- Boduanchar 孛端察兒, youngest son of Alanquoa.
- Boghtagh, *m.* Headress.
- Böl *m.* slave
- Boluoketu 孛羅克禿, place name in Mongolia.
- Boluo Tiemuer 孛羅帖木兒, son of Bengbula of the Onggirat tribe.
- Boraqchin 孛剌合真(Bola Hezhen), first wife of Ögödei Khan.
- Borhu 博爾忽
- Böröigän 孛二只今
- Borshu 伯爾術
- Börte Ujin 孛爾帖兀真, Cheinggis Khan's first wife, the daughter of Dei Sechen
- Botasirin, 寶塔失里, wife of Korean King Kongmin, Wang Ki 王祺 and daughter of Amoga.
- Botu 孛禿, brother-in-law of Chinggis Khan, nobleman of the Ikires tribe.
- Boworchu 孛斡二出
- Boyaluhan 伯牙魯罕, daughter of Möngke Khan, married Hulian 忽憐, of the Ikires tribe.
- Boyanhudu 伯顏忽都, Princess of Qinghua” 慶華公主 married Korean king Wang To.
- Boyokha 孛要合, younger son of Alaques, the leader of the Öngüt tribe.
- Buda-shili 不答失里, empress of Wenzong, daughter of Diao’abula
- Buhua 不花, Hulian’s younger cousin, Tiemugan’s son
- Buhaihan 不海罕, wife of Suorha of the Ikires tribe.
- Bulanxi 不蘭奚, granddaughter of Möngke Khan, wife of Hulian of the Ikires tribe.
- Bulga 不剌合, wife of Jurikeh (son of Tolui).*
- Bulianjidai 不憐吉呆, Suoduge’s son, Prince of Ning Chang
- Bulughan 不魯罕, Empress of Chengzong Temür Öljeitü.
- Bulughan 不魯罕, Mongol princess, wife of Tuoluohe 脫羅禾 of the Onggirat tribe.
- Buqa- Temür (son of Törölchi)*
- Büri, Qara- Hülegü’s elder broth.
- Buyanhudu 不顏忽都, daughter of Boluo Tiemuer 孛羅帖木耳, Empress of Mingzong
- Buyanxiban 不顏昔班
- Buyirug 不亦魯黑罕, chief of the Naiman tribe.
- Buzhier 不只兒, grandson of Huqu.
- Caizhen 采真 wife of Aibuge 愛不哥 (Huaidu’s younger brother)
- Caranoutes 哈刺納惕部, a sub-tribe of Onggirat tribe
- Ce 冊, son of Dei Sechen.
- Chabui/Chabi 察必 Khatun, Empress of Khubilai Khan, daughter of Anchen of the Onggirat tribe.

Chaghatai 察合臺, second son of Chinggis Khan.

Chalun 茶倫, wife of Tieligan of the Ikires tribe.

Changji 昌吉, grandson of Chigu.

Cha'ur Beki 察兀兒別吉, daughter of Ong-Khan.

Checheyigen/Secheyigen Aghai/ Checheyigen/ Chichigen/扯扯亦堅/扯扯亦干/濶濶干,
daughter of Chinggis Khan, married to Inalchi's wife of the Oirat tribe.

Chen You 陳祐

Chigu 赤古, first son of Anchen of the Onggirat tribe.

Chila'un 赤老溫

Chinggis Khan 成吉思汗

Chingtüm 鎮土木 wife of Qonichi.

Chobi 趙妃.

Cho Ch'ung 趙冲.

Ch'oe T'an 崔坦.

Ch'oe Yi 崔怡.

Ch'öin 處仁, a Korean city

Chöngwa 貞和, wife of the Korean King Ch'ungyö.

Chouhan 丑漢, descendant of Bige of the Onggirat tribe.

chu shui jiu lu 出水就陸

Clan tribe, group

Coulun / Hulan 忽蘭, wife of Chinggis Khan.

Counkouloutes 弘吉剌兀惕部, a sub-tribe of Onggirat tribe)

Dada 韃靼 Tartar

Dadu 大都, Grand Capital of the Yuan dynasty.

Daji 妲己, a favorite woman of Zhou Wang 紂王 of the Shang dynasty.

Dalamabala 答刺麻八剌, Yuzong's son Shunzong 順宗.

Dar Haizi 答兒海子.

Darhan *m.* freeman

Darughachi 達魯花赤

Da xile 大喜樂

Dei Sechen 德薛禪, father-in-law of Chinggis Khan, a nobleman of the Onggirat tribe.

Deleger River 德勒格爾河

Deshou 德壽, son of Chengzong.

Diaoa-bula 瑯阿不剌, son of Tiemuer of the Onggirat tribe., husband of princess Sengge
Ragi (Xiangge-Laji 祥哥剌吉)

Dobun-mergen, son of Alanquoa.

D'Ohsson, *i. X. Abe Remusat, Nouveaux Melanges Asiatique.*

Dongping 東平

Dongzhen 東真

Duluor 都羅兒, grandson of Harhasun.

Dumugan/Tümügen 獨木干, daughter of Tolui, married to Niegutai 聶古台 (Prince of Yu, son of Zhenguo), remarried Chahu 察忽 of the Öngüt Tribe

Duor-Zhiban 朵兒只班, Mongol princess, wife of Alijiashili of the Onggirat tribe.

Dürlükün 多兒勒斤

Ebugem. ancestor

Ecigem. father

Egechim. elder sister

Eke *m.* mother

Ekenerm. wife

El-Chiqmish Khatun, the senior wife of Arigh Böke

Emegen 額木干, wife of Melik-Temür 明理帖木兒, daughter of Pars-buqa 巴爾思不花 of the Oirat tribe.

Emergen, *m.* female ancestor

Empress Lü 呂后

Eshitei 額失歹, wife of Arigh Böke.

Fâtima 法蒂瑪 (sorcery)

Gaochang 高昌

Gegen

Gergen*m.* principal wife

Ghazan Khan 合贊汗, r. 1295-1304, son of Arhun.

Goden Horde 金帳汗國

Guanglu Dafu 光祿大夫, Grand Master for Splendid Happiness.

Guna-dala 古納答剌, son of Wenzong.

Gurgen/ Küregen *m.* son-in-law

Gür-khan 古兒汗

Güyük 貴由, first son of Ögödei Khan.

Had, *m.* duke, prince

Hadahan 哈答罕, daughter of Prince Saiyinzhubu 賽因主卜, wife of Yuelietai 月列台

Hadan-tulugan 哈丹禿魯干, descendant of Hechiwen (the younger brother of Chinggis Khan).

Hahai 哈海, son of Nachen.

Hama 哈麻, bodyguard of Shundi.

Hao Jing 郝經, political advisor of Khubilai Khan.

Har-dijin 哈兒的斤

Harhasun 哈兒哈孫, son of Ce.

Harzhi 哈兒只

Hasar 合薩兒, younger brother of Chinggis Khan.

Hatun, *Mo.* queen and ladies

Hechiwen 合赤溫

Heqin 和親

Hö'elun 訶阿倫, wife of Yesugei, mother of Chinggis Khan.

Hö'ün*m.* son

Höbe'gün son, prince

Holuiqan 豁雷罕, daughter of Jochi, who married Törölchi of the Oirat tribe.

Hubi *m.* fief

Hudadiemish/Qudadmish 忽答迭迷失, daughter of Jin Gim, wife of Kuolijisi 闊里吉思 of the Öngüt Tribe.

Huhanxie Chanyu 呼韓邪單于

Huihe/Uyihur 回紇, daughter of Azhiji 阿只吉, wife of Qiaolincha 喬鄰察 of the Öngüt Tribe.

Hulan 忽蘭, Empress of Chinggis Khan.

Hülegü 旭烈兀 IL-Khan, (1) fifth son of Tolui. (2) Son of Orda, grandson of Jochi.

Hulian 忽憐, son of Zhawu-Erchen of the Ikires tribe.

Hundugu 渾都古

Hundu Tiemuer 渾都帖木兒

Huochenbieji 火臣別吉 / Khojen Beki 豁真別吉, daughter of Chinggis Khan, wife of Botu of the Ikires tribe.

Huqu/Huohu 火忽, son of Dei Sechen.

Hutuheitai/Qutuqтай 忽秃黑台, Empress of Möngke Khan, daughter of Suorha 鎖兒哈 of the Ikires tribe.

Idu-qut/Iduq-qut/Idikut 亦都護

Ikiras/Ikires/ Ikirasses 亦乞列思

Ile-Temür/Yantiemur 燕帖木兒, daughter of Tolui and wife of Pars-buqa 巴爾思不花 of the Oirat tribe.

Ilgen 亦勒堅, wife of Bayan 伯顏 (Qonichi's first son), daughter of Temüge 帖木格

Ilkhaltun Begi /Ilghaltun Begi 也里安敦別吉, daughter of Chinggis Khan.

Im Yŏn 林衍

Inalchi / Inalči 亦納勒赤, son of Quduḡa Beki /Khuduqa /Khutukha-Begi

Irgen*m.* tribe

Irinjinbal, wife of the Korean king Wang Chǒng, daughter of Jiaoba

King Ch'unghye

Jad *m.* foreigner, alien

Jam *m.* post station

Jāmi' al-Tawarikh 史集

Jamuka /Jamuga 札木合

Jarlig*m.* imperial decree

Jasa *m.* code, statute book

Jegün-gar *m.* left-wing

Jialinzhen 珈璘真

Jian River 健河

Jiansi 監司

Jigu, *m.* sister's son, nephew

Jin 金 (1115-1234)

Jin-Gim 真金, son of Khubilai Khan, crown prince of Yuan.

Jining 濟寧

Jintong 金童, wife of the Korean King Wang To 王燾 daughter of Amuge 阿木哥

Jochi 術赤, Chinggis Khan's eldest son.

John of Plano Carpini

Juancheng 鄧城

Junshou 郡守

Juwaini 術外尼 Ta-rikh-i-Jahan-Gusha (History of the World-Conqueror), translated by John Andrew Boyle (1916-1978)

Kaegyöng 開京

Kaiping 開平

Kammala/ Ganmala 甘麻剌, Jin-Gim's first son.

Kanghwa island 江華島

Kangyangkong Cha 江陽公滋, Korean prince, son of King Ch'ungyö.

Karakorum 和林, capital of the Mongol Empire.

Kelmish-aqa 克勒迷失阿合, wife of Saljiday 撒勒只台, daughter of Qutuqtu 忽睹都 (third son of Tolui).

Kentei 肯特山

Kerät / Kereit / Karâit 克烈部

Kerulen 怯綠連河

Keshigci *m.* guards

Khadan /Qadan 哈丹, sixth son of Ögödei.

Khaidu/ Qaidu 海都, son of Qashi, grandson of Ögödei.

Khaishan/Qaishan 海山, Wuzong, r. 1307-1311, son of Tarmabala

Khan 汗, *m.* chief of a tribe, emperor

Khan-balik 汗八里 (元中都)

Khangai 杭愛山

Khatun 哈敦 empress, imperial consort

Khitan 契丹

Khojen Beki 豁真別吉, eldest daughter of Chinggis Khan.

Kholunkhan 豁雷罕, daughter of Jochi, wife of Inalchi of the Oirat tribe.

Khubilai (Qubilai) 忽必烈

Khuchu 忽出 wife of Toqoqan/Tuqan 禿罕, mother of Möngke-Temür, daughter of Törölchi of the Oirat tribe.

Khudugha Beki/ Khutukha-Begi / Qudugha 忽都合別吉, chief of the Oirat tribe.

Khudulu(gh)Khaimish 忽都魯揭里迷失, daughter of Khubilai, married Korean king Ch'ungyŏl Wang Sim 王謹, mother of Yuan 諫

Khuriltai *m.* meeting, congress

Khwārazm 花刺子模

Kichik/keshik 怯薛

Kimdong 金童, Mongol princess (daughter of Amoga), married Korean King Wang To Kiptchac 欽察

Kitad *m.* slave

Kiya *m.* body guard

Kiyan tribe 乞顏, the tribe that Chinggis Khan belonged to.

Köchü/Qochu 闊出, third son of Ögetei Khan.

Kökejin (chn. Kuokuo-zhen) 闊闊真, wife of Jin-gim, daughter-in-law of Khubilai

Kokochü 濶濶出, (Teb Tenggeri), a famous Shaman who helped Chinggis ascend the throne. Later was killed by Chinggis Khan.

Kongirat/Konkurat/Kongrat 弘吉剌

Kökejin 闊闊真, wife of Temür-Buqa 帖木兒不花 (first son of Hülegü).

Köten (chn. Kuoduan) 闊端, second son of Ögödei Khan.

Köyitien 闊亦田, the battle field that Chinggis Khan and Ong Khan's joint army fought against the joint army led by Jamuka.

Kubak 古巴克 Khatun, wife of Hülegü Khan, daughter of Törölchi of the Oirat tribe.

Küchlüg 屈出律, the Naiman prince who seized the Khara-Khitai throne.†

Kun-dgah-rho-rje (1309-1364): Hu-lan-deb-ther 紅史

Kuokuolun 闊闊倫, Mongol princess, wife of Tuoluohe of the Onggirat tribe.

Küregen / Güregen 古列堅(imperial-son-in-law)

Lian Texin 鍊德新

Liao 遼 (907-1125)

Lienü Zhuan 列女傳

Khatun/Lingqum Khatun, Lingqun wife of Arigh Böke, the daughter of Küchlüg Khan.

lin zhong bai xing 林中百姓 people in the forest.

Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠, Grand Guardian (chn. Taibao 太保) in Khubilai's reign.

Luluhan 魯魯罕, Mongol princess, wife of Suoduge 唆都哥 of the Ikires tribe.

Lulun 魯倫, Mongol princess, wife of Suoduge 唆都哥 of the Ikires tribe.

Maidi 買的, Mongol princess, wife of Ashi of the Ikires tribe.

Maizhuhan 買住罕, son of Bengbula of the Onggirat tribe.

Manggechen 忙哥陳, Dei Sechen's grandson

- Manggetai 忙哥台, wife of Changji (Chigu's great grandson).
- Mangqala 忙哥剌, the third son of Khubilai Khan.
- Mankku-lukan, daughter of Hülegü Khan, wife of Jaqir of the Oirat tribe.
- Manzitai 蠻子台, younger brother of Tiemuer of the Onggirat tribe.
- Märkit /Merkit 蔑兒乞部
- Mao Yanshou 毛延壽, court artist of the han dynasty.
- Meixi 妹喜, a favorite woman of Jie in the Xia dynasty.
- Melik-Temür 滅里/明理帖木兒, second son of Arigh Böke.
- Mengü-Temür/ Möngke-Temür, son of Hülegü.*
- Mingganon, *m.* thousand households
- Mö'etüken, second son of Chaghatai Khan.
- Mogo, wife of Chinggis Khan and was inherited by Ögödei.
- Möngke / Mongu 蒙哥, the eldest son of Tolui.*
- Möngke-Temur 蒙哥帖木兒, (1) second son of Toqoqan, grandson of Batu. (2) son of
- Münglig/Menglik 蒙力克, father of Kokochü 闊闊出, (Teb Tenggeri), step-father of Chinggis Khan.
- Muqali /Muhuali 木華黎, one of the four most gifted generals of Chinggis Khan.
- Nachen 納陳, third son of Anchen of the Onggirat tribe.
- Nahe 納合, grandson of Anchen of the Onggirat tribe.
- Naiman 乃蠻
- Naiyan 乃顏, great-great-grandson of Otchijin 幹赤斤 (Chinggis Khan's youngest brother).
- Nambui / Nanbi 南必, Khubilai's wife, the daughter of Xiantong 仙童 of the Onggirat tribe.
- Nange Bula 南哥不剌, daughter of the crown prince Jin Gim, wife of Manzitai.
- Nangjiazhen 囊加真, daughter of Khubilai, wife of Woluochoen 幹羅陳, remarried Tiemur 帖木兒 and Manzitai 蠻子台
- Nayan, *m.* official, lord, noble
- Nayan Khatun, wife of Tolui 拖雷
- Nekün Taisi 涅坤大石, brother of Yesügei.
- Néstorianisme 景教
- Niegutai 聶古台
- Niequn 捏坤, father of Botu of the Ikires tribe.
- Nierjin 溺兒斤, a sub-tribe of the Onggirat tribe.
- Nirun 尼倫
- Niulin-dijin 紐林的斤
- Nolun 納倫, wife of Korean Wang Hao 王皓 Prince of Shen (Sim Wang 藩王), daughter of Songshan 松山
- Noyan 那顏
- Nuhan 奴罕, wife of Khubilai.

Nulun 奴倫, daughter of the Mongol prince Wan Ze 完澤 wife of Alibadai 阿里八歹 of the Öngüt Tribe

Numugan, daughter of Arigh Böke, wife of Junan of the Oirat tribe.

Nuwulun 奴兀倫, daughter of Manggela 忙哥刺 wife of Suolangha 鎖郎哈 of the Ikires Tribe

Obogh, *m.* clan or tribe, particular blood-related alliance

Odchigin 斡赤斤, Chinggis Khan's youngest brother.

Odcigin ejen, *m.* master of kitchen range—the youngest son

Oghul Ghaimish 斡兀里海迷失, principal wife of Güyük.

Ögödei (Ögetei Qa'an) 窩闊台, third son of Chinggis Khan.

Oirat/Oirad/Oyirad 斡亦剌/瓦剌

Öljei Khatun/Aulljai Öljei /Auljai 完者 Empress sister of Kubak, mother of Möngke-Temür, remarried Abaḡa of Hülegü Khan, (2) empress of Arghun, Il-Khan of Persia, r.1284-1291, daughter of Sulamish, granddaughter of Tenggis

Olqunu'ud-Onggirat 斡勒忽納兀惕—弘吉剌部 (Wolehuna 斡勒忽納), a sub-tribe of Onggirat tribe

Omogm. family

Ong *m.* king

Onggirat 弘吉剌部

Ong-Khan 王罕, To'oril Khan of the Kereyid.

Öngüt 汪古部

Onon 斡難河

Orda, eldest son of Jochi.

Ordou/ Ordu 斡兒朵, Mongol Khan's tent palace

Orqina/Aürgneh Khatun 斡兒吉納, wife of Qara-Hülegü.

O Yunpu 伍允孚

Piao Buhua 朴不花, a Korean eunuch, ambassador of the *Zizheng Yuan* in Shundi's reign.

Princess Supreme of the State of Qi 齊國大長公主

Princess Wencheng 文成公主

Puna 普納 Mongol princess, wife of Sangge-Bula of the Onggirat tribe.

Puxian-Wannu 蒲鮮萬奴

Puyang 濮陽

Puyankelimeisi 普顏可里迷失, Mongol princess, wife of Bulianjidai 不憐吉歹 of the Ikires tribe.

Qachi'un 合赤溫, Chinggis Khan's younger brother.

Qara- Hülegü 合剌旭烈兀, fourth son of Mö'etüken, grandson of Chaghatai.

Qaraqorum 喀刺和林

Qarkeh-aml (Dierge-ke-emiele 迭兒格-克額蔑勒), chief of the Onggirat tribe in the early 13th century.

Qasar 合撒兒, Chinggis Khan's younger brother.

Qianhu 千戶, Battalion Commander

Qishan 岐山

Qishi Wanzhehuda 奇氏完者忽都, a Korean woman, Empress of Shundi.

Qtaqash 合塔合失, wife of Kurju 闐出 (son of Ögödei).

Qtqin/Hedajin 合答斤

Quanning 全寧

Quda/Huda 忽答, *m.* A kinship, term used by and in reference to those who are relatives by virtue of the marriage of their children.

Quriltai/ khuriltai 庫爾台

Qutlu, wife of Arigh Böke 阿里不哥

Qutuqtu

Rashid al-Din (1247-1317); Jami'al-Tavarikh (Collection of Histories) 史集

Salita 撒禮塔

Saljidai 撒勒只臺

Salji'üd / Salezhiwuti 撒勒只兀惕

Sambyölch'o 三別抄

Sanggebula/Suga-bala 桑哥八剌, Mongol princess, married Mazhahan 馬札罕 of the the Öngüt Tribe.

Sangge-bula 桑哥不剌, son of Tiemuer of the Onggirat tribe

Sanggebula 桑哥不剌, wife of Tuotumur 脫脫木兒 of the Onggirat tribe.

Semu 色目

Sengge Ragi 祥哥剌吉 (? 1282-1332), the mother-in-law of Wenzong.

Senggüm's 桑昆, son of Ong-Khan.

Sengün, *m.* official title

Shalanduoer 沙蘭朵兒, son of Balashili.

Shangdu 上都, Supreme Capital

Shatuo-yanmen 沙陀雁門

Shi Shouxin 石守信

Shidebala 碩德八剌, Yingzong, r. 1321-1323.

Shiliandali 失憐答里, empress of Chengzong, daughter of Woluochen of the Onggirat tribe.

Shirap/Shalan 沙蘭, son of Parsbuqa of the Oirat tribe. he married a Yuan princess.

Shiremün 失列門, son of Köchü, grandson of Ögödei.

Shiyi 食邑

Shou Tong 壽童, empress of Wuzong Qaishan, mother of Mingzong, daughter of

Shuer-chedan 術兒徹丹

Shumishi 樞密使

Shuosijian 搆思監, Chancellor of the Right in Shundi's reign.

Sorghaghtani-Beki 唆爾忽帖尼別吉, senior wife of Tolui, mother of Khubilai.

Sugebala 速哥八剌, daughter of Princess Yilihaiya, principle empress of Yingzong.

Sugedali 速哥答里, Empress of Emperor Taiding, daughter of Maizhuhan.

Sugesili 速哥失里, Eempress of Wuzong, daughter of Harzhi

Sulde *m.* banner, county

Solangha 索朗哈

Suoduge 唆都哥, Buhua's younger brother, Prince of Ning Chang 寧昌郡王.

Suorha 鎖兒哈 son of Botu.

Suorhahan 唆兒哈罕, daughter of Ögödei, wife of Nahe

Suor-Huodu 唆兒火都, son of Anchen.

Taihuludu 台忽魯都, wife of Chouhan 丑漢 of the Onggirat tribe.

Taijigot/Taijiut 泰赤兀

Talahai 塔刺海, wife of Khubilai.

Tankkiz (Tengjisi): chief of the Oirat tribe, who married the daughter of Güyük Khan.

Tarmabala / Dalamabala 答刺麻八剌, second son of Jin-gim.

Tartar 塔塔爾

Tayang Khan 太陽罕, King of Naiman state.

Tchagatai 察合台, second son of Chinggis Khan.

Tegülün/Tiegulun 帖古倫, the daughter of Tuolianwife of Khubilai Khan. 脫憐 of the Onggirat tribe.

Temüge Odchigin 鉄木格斡赤斤, younger brother of Chinggis Khan.

Temüjin /Tiemuzhen, 鉄木真, name of Chinggis Khan.

Temüjin-Wuge 鉄木真兀格, the chief of the Tartar tribe, captured by Yesügei.

Temülün 鉄木侖, younger sister of Chinggis Khan.

Temür Öljeitü 鉄穆耳, third son of Jim-Gim, *r.* 1295-1307.

Tikong 提控

Tian mo wunü 天魔舞女

Tieligan/Tiejiangan 帖里干/帖堅干, Botu's son.

Tiemudier 帖木迭兒, chancellor under Wentsung's reign, favorite of Empress Dowager Daji.

Tiemuer 帖木兒, son of Nachen.

Tobaqana 脫巴合納, wife of Orda.

Tödögach, daughter of Hülegü 旭烈兀 Khan and wife of Tanggis of the Oirat tribe.

Toghan-Temür 脫歡帖穆爾.

Tolui/ Tului 拖雷, youngest son of Chinggis Khan.

Toqoqan/Tûqân, second son of Batu.

Toquluqan 脫忽魯罕, wife of Qonichi (Orda's first son Sartaqtaï's first son)

Töregene 脫列哥納, wife of Ögödei.

Törelchi/ Törölchi 脫劣勒赤, Khuduqa Bekison of

Torgüd *m.* relatives on the side of wives

Toungous 東胡 (通古斯)

Touxia 投下

Tükünche 禿昆怯, wife of Toqta (fifth son of Toqoqan, ruler of Goden Horde from 1291 to 1312).

Tumad 禿麻部

Tumanlun 禿滿倫, daughter of Chinggis Khan, wife of Chigu 赤古 of the Onggirat tribe.

Tümenten thousand households

Tuoba 拓跋(A.D. 399-534)

Tuohei-Tuoa 脫黑脫阿, chief of Merkit tribe.

Tuohuan 脫歡, son of Nachen.

Tuolian 脫憐, Anchen's grandson.

Tuoluohe 脫羅禾, grandson of Dei Sechen.

Tuosima 脫思麻

Tuotuohui 脫脫灰, Granddaughter of Khubilai Khan, wife of Tumandar 禿滿答兒 of the Oirat tribe.

Tuotuumur 脫脫木兒

Tuotuoshur 脫脫術兒

Tuq Temür 圖帖穆爾 Wenzong, r. 1329-1332.

Tusaqa 禿撒哈, son of Senggüm.

turghagh (*m.*) 禿魯花 hostage

Üibi 懿妃

Uighur 畏吾兒

Ulus, *m.* nation, people

urugh/uruh, *m.* of the same clan

Waiqi 外戚

Wang Chǎng 王曄

Wang Chōl 王暕

Wang Chōn 王禎(1331-1332), King Ch'unghye of Korea.

Wang Ki 王祺(r. 1352-1374), King Kongmin of Korea.

Wang Mang 王莽

Wang Sik 王植

Wang Sim 王諶, (r. 1275-1308), King Ch'ungyōl of Korea.

Wang Sung 王嵩, the Sim Wang of Korea.

Wang To 王燾 King Ch'unugsug of(1314-1330), Korea.

Wang Wōn 王諫(1309-1313), King Ch'unugsōn of Korea.

Wang Zhaojun 王昭君

Wanhu, 万戶 Brigade Commander.

Wanyan Ziyuan 完顏子淵

Wanze 完澤, wife of Woluochen.

Wochen 斡陳, second son of Anchen of the Onggirat tribe.

Wokezhen 斡可真

Woliuchar 斡留察兒, grandson of Anchen.

Woluochen 斡羅陳, son of Nachen.

Wongji Bahu 翁吉八忽, wife of Huaidu 懷都 (grandson of Chigu)

Wuluzhen 兀魯真/吾魯真, daughter of Kubilai Khan, wife of Buhua of the Ikires tribe. Wu Zetian 武則天

Xi Xia 西夏 (1032-1227)

Xiantong 仙童

Xiangzong 襄宗, Emperor of the Xi Xia state.

Xiao Daheng 肖大亨

Xining Prefecture 西寧州

Xiongnu 匈奴

Xu Heng 許衡, minister in Khubilai's reign.

Xuanzong 宣宗, Emperor of the Jin dynasty.

Xuezhigan 薛只干, granddaughter of Khubilai Khan, wife of Nachen 納陳

Xuzhou 徐州

yan dier fa 演揲兒法

Yang Guozhong 楊國忠

Yanheya 煙合牙, Mongol princess, wife of Balashili 八剌失里 of the Ikires tribe.

Yao Shu 姚樞, advisor of Khubilai Khan.

Yebujiandai 也不堅歹

Yeke-Chiliedü 也克赤列都, the first husband of Hö'elün Üjin (Chinggis' mother) from the Merkit (Märkit) tribe.

Yeke Monggol Ulus, Great Mongol State

Yeke Nayan, High-ranking noble

Yeke Ulus, fief directly belonged to the Great Khan

Yelimishi/Yelmish 葉里迷失, Daughter of Güyük Khan, wife of Junbuhua 君不花 (Prince of Zhong Xiang son of Boyaohe) of the Öngüt Tribe.

Yelü Chucai/Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材, Chancellor of the Right during Ögödei's reign and the Toregene's regency.

Yelü Liuge 耶律留哥

Yemianganzhen/Emegenjin 葉綿干真, daughter of prince Wludai 兀魯歹 and wife of Shuhunan of the Öngüt Tribe.

Yesubuhua 也速不花, Daughter of Tolui, wife of Wochen of the Onggirat tribe.

Yesügei 也速該, father of Chinggis Khan.

Yesü-Mengü/Yesü- Möngke, fifth son of Chaghatai's.

Yesün-Temür/Yesun Tiemur 也孫鐵木兒, Taidingdi, r. 1324-1328.

Yesunzhen 也孫真, daughter of Prince Anchidai 安赤歹 married Zhawu-Erchen 札兀兒臣 of the Ikires tribe.

Yesur 也速兒, Empress Möngke Khan, taken by Yobuqur, son of Arigh Böke.

Yesujin 也速真, Mongol princess, wife of the Korean king Wang Wŏn 王諤

Yexian 也先

Yibahe 亦巴合, wife of Chinggis Khan, granted to his general, Zhuer-Chedai 主兒扯歹

Yilianzhen 亦憐真, Mongol princess, wife of Nangjiatai 囊家台 of the Öngüt Tribe.

Yilianzhenbala Mongol princess, married Korean king Wang To.

Yilianzhenbala 亦憐真八剌, daughter of princess Yilihaiya 益里海涯, Empress of Emperor Taiding

Yilihaiya 益里海涯, the daughter of Chengzong, wife of Ashi 阿失 of the Ikires tribe.

yina 倚納

Yin Zhou Wang 殷紂王

Yingchang 應昌

Yiqiliesi 亦乞列思, wife of Tieligan/Tiejangan 帖里干/帖堅干 of the Ikires tribe.

Yi Shou Wang 逸壽王

Yixiji 一悉基, Mongol princess, wife of Burtua [Palituo] 八里托 of the Oirat tribe.

Yongsan Wŏnja 龍山王子, Korean prince, mother was Mongol princess Jintong 金童

Yort *m.* domain, territory.

you shou jun 右手軍

Yu Fu Zhi 與服志 Records of Imperial Carriages and Garments.

Yuandi 元帝, Emperor of the Han dynasty

Yuelietai 月列台, son of Zhawu-Erchen of the Ikires tribe.

Yuelu 月魯, daughter of Mingzong, wife of Shalanduor 沙藍朵兒 of the Ikires tribe.

Yulongzhan 玉龍棧

Yunzhong 雲中

Zha'a-qianbo 札阿鉗孛, younger brother of Ong Khan.

Zhahuerchen 札忽兒臣, Suorha's son, Prince of Cahng.

Zhamayan 詐馬宴

Zhao Kuangyin 趙匡胤, founder of the Song dynasty.

Zhao Liangbi 趙良璧

Zhawu-Erchen 札兀兒臣, son of Suorha.

Zhenge 真哥, Empress of Wuzong, the daughter of Bengbula.

Zhenguo 鎮國, nephew of Alaques of the Öngüt tribe.

zhisun banquet 只孫宴

Zhongjin 鍾金

Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, founder of the Ming Dynasty.

Zhuoguyu 著古與

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